Rota cop in sex abuse case now free. PAGE 2
TSL Foundation, TanHoldings donation promotes school spirit. PAGE 12

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Yamamoto seeks shared payment of custodial fees for M/V *Luta*

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Japanese investor who is suing Lt. Gov. Victor Hocog and the operators of M/V *Luta* for allegedly refusing to pay back the $3.4 million that he put up for the vessel said he should not be the only one paying for the vessel's custodian fees.

Takahisa Yamamoto, through counsel George Lloyd Hasselback, said that everyone who is seeking to intervene in his lawsuit should also share in paying for the custodian fees.

The vessel's custodian, National Maritime Services Inc., asked the court early this week to require Yamamoto to pay $82,463.33 for custo-

See YAMAMOTO on Page 4

BOE: Govt owes PSS $10.3M

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Board of Education meeting yesterday reignited talks about the CNMI government owing money to the CNMI Public School System.

See BOE on Page 4

FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, VIOLATING COURT'S ORDER

Ex-Rota cop gets 9 months in prison

A former Rota police officer arrested in July for domestic violence and in August for violating a court order of protection and for breaking several times into an apartment on Saipan has pleaded guilty and was slapped with a

See EX-ROTA on Page 4

'Divert airfield to bring development to Tinian'

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tinian leaders welcomed the U.S. Air Force decision last week to build an alternative airport on the island but they said they would still scrutinize the U.S. military and Department of Defense's final plans for the divert

See DIVERT on Page 4

BIKE RUN CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Matua Riders pose with children from Koberville Estate during the Matua Rider's annual Christmas Spirit Bike Run in the village. The Matua Riders also made similar runs at the Commonwealth Health Center, Office on Aging, Kanoa Resort Saipan, and Garapan Annex.

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INSIDE

WORLD
A cease-fire to evacuate rebel fighters and civilians from Aleppo unravels.

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SCIENCE & TECH
Yahoo hacking serves as a reminder to change one's passwords.

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LIFE & STYLE
Jackie Evancho will sing the national anthem at Donald Trump's inauguration.

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MVA

Representatives of travel agencies and the Marianas Visitors Authority gathered for a Marianas seminar about Saipan, Tinian, and Rota on Dec. 8, 2016, in Vladivostok, Russia.

MVA shares 'NMI treasure' with Russian travel agents

The Marianas Visitors Authority's Marianas Seminar destination training session was held in Russia on Thursday, Dec. 8, with 17 managers and directors from top travel agencies of Vladivostok. Seminars in other cities will follow.

The event, held at popular café Cat & Clover located in the heart of the city, opened with a presentation on tourist attractions on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, as well as new tourism developments.

The seminar then engaged participants in the thematic quest "Treasures of Northern Marianas" developed for the MVA by Quest Cafe entertaining company. In the game, a treasure hunter had hidden his gold somewhere in the Northern Marianas, and to find the treasure, contestants had to collect pieces of the map from five of his relatives living on the islands. Four teams attempted to execute different tasks with five game characters; sage, shaman, fisherman, detective and cook. The sage solved logical riddles, the fisherman took a virtual exploration trip, the detective helped with the investigation and searched for evidence in a dark room using an ultraviolet flashlight, the shaman made participants take part in a mystical ceremony, and the cook found ingredients for a tropical cocktail. At the end of the game the winners received a chest full of gold bullion bars (made of chocolate), an NMI-themed cake and a gift certificate from Quest Cafe. Following the evening's banquet, each participant received a set of branded giveaways from the MVA. Included were passport covers, luggage tags and eyeshades with the Saipan Tinian Rota logo.

"It's wintertime in Vladivostok, so this is the perfect time to remind travel agents about the tropical allure of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota with a creative theme-based quest," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "The Northern Marianas is still receiving a some visitors from Russia, largely via Seoul and largely repeat visitors, and we will continue to woo the market until we see an economic turnaround. Russian visitors are still important to the Northern Marianas."

In fiscal year 2016, the CNMI received 1,796 visitors from Russia, a 35-percent decrease from the previous fiscal year due to the difficult Russian economy and an expensive currency exchange rate from the ruble to the dollar. On average, Russian visitors stay considerably longer and spend more money in the NMI compared to other source market visitors. ***(MVA)***

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Fish Eye Marine Park signs Håfa Adai Pledge

From left, Akihiro Tani (Fish Eye Marine Park, general manager), Nate Denight (Guam Visitors Bureau president and CEO), Renny Loren (Fish Eye Marine Park, senior manager), and members of the island-style dinner show at the Håfa Adai Pledge ceremony held at the Fish Eye Marine Park on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TUMON, Guam—The Guam Visitors Bureau announced yesterday that Fish Eye Marine Park is now the newest member of the Håfa Adai Pledge family. The pledge signing ceremony took place at the visitors center across the street from their ocean observatory in Piti.

During the ceremony, Fish Eye Marine Park general manager Akihiro Tani shared that the company decided to take the pledge to show its commitment in spreading the Håfa Adai Spirit and culture. Supporting the Håfa Adai Pledge would ultimately help to flourish the Chamorro culture at the establishment.

Marine Park senior manager Renny Loren presented the pledges stating, "We pledge to commit to sharing the Håfa Adai spirit to all our customers, not only to those visiting from overseas but to those living on island. We have and will continue to display more Chamorro signs and artwork throughout our property as well as continue to include a selection of local dishes in our lunch and dinner buffet. In the near future, we plan to gradually incorporate Chamorro music and language to our island-style dinner show. Our last pledge is to share the Håfa Adai Pledge spirit, with the help of our management and staff, through our unique and warm hospitality to all our customers."

Fish Eye Marine Park has been the main ocean observatory in Guam since 1996. Since then, this popular tourist site attracts over 180,000 visitors annually. The underwater observatory is built in the Piti Bomb Hole Marine Preserves and offer locals and tourists different tours that show off the island's marine life. The visitors center is home to the island-style dinner show is a cultural dinner performance that showcases the culture of the islands.

The park has already been promoting the Håfa Adai spirit for the past 20 years and celebrated its anniversary in April.

About the pledge

The Håfa Adai Pledge program is the cornerstone of the Guam Visitors Bureau's local community branding campaign. In its seventh year, the Håfa Adai Pledge program has grown steadily in the number of participants as well as the commitment of individual pledges. In March of 2016, GVB reached a significant milestone, welcoming its 600th pledge, representing more than 33,000 individuals from private businesses, government agencies, non-profits and other organizations that have joined the Håfa Adai Pledge program. ***(GVB)***

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TanHoldings and Tan Siu Lin Foundation present donated dri-fit shirts to Saipan Southern High School students and teachers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TSL Foundation, TanHoldings donation promotes school spirit

Marianas High School and Saipan Southern High School students and teachers received dri-fit shirts from Tan Siu Lin Foundation and TanHoldings on Friday, Dec. 9, 2016. Kagman, Tinian, and Rota high schools will receive these dri-fit shirts as well.

In the Christmas spirit, TanHoldings president Jerry Tan accompanied the distribution team to help hand out the shirts to both schools. Each student will receive a dri-fit shirt, custom-printed with their school logo in front, and an "Eat Healthy & Exercise Daily" logo in the back.

Bobby Cruz, vice principal of Marianas High School, expressed his gratitude for the donation. "Tan Holdings continues to be one of Marianas High School's greatest educational partners. To promote school pride and celebrate strength in diversity, TanHolding generously donated 1,700 dri-fit shirts featuring the MHS school colors and logo. Before the holiday break, everyone of our Mighty Dolphins will receive a shirt. The students and staff have been excitedly awaiting the shirts, so now that we have them, our Mighty Dolphin family would like to extend our gratitude to TanHoldings for their legacy of generosity to our island community and support of MHS. It truly takes an invested community to help students ignite a passion for perpetual discovery and fosters an unrelenting desire to keep pursuing their dreams. Donations from all our partners show our students that their community stakeholders care and are behind them! Thank you ,TanHoldings!"

Saipan Southern High School's vice principal, Jonathan Aguon also said, "Saipan Southern High School is incredibly grateful and appreciative of this generous contribution. It is fitting that this was made during the holiday season to cheer and foster the spirit of giving. Students are excited to receive their shirt. They were surprised to see that many donated to the school."

This donation is a part of the $50,000 TanHoldings and TSL Foundation gave to the Public School System. Tan shares the foundation's passion and commitment in the value of education and sports and hopes this small gesture will be cherished by the students.

TSL Foundation is the philanthropic arm of TanHoldings, committed to uplifting the quality of life in the communities that it serves. ***(PR)***

TanHoldings and Tan Siu Lin Foundation present donated dri-fit shirts to Marianas High School students and teachers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Local

Rota cop in sex abuse case now free

A Rota police officer charged with sexually abusing a 14-year-old girl is now a free man.

The Office of the Attorney General moved yesterday to dismiss the charges against the 48-year-old Melvin Maratita Manglona without prejudice. This means the government may re-refile the case in the future.

"Because the Office of the Attorney General has dismissed the charges, the case cannot move forward," Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho said.

The judge pointed out that it is the OAG that decides to dismiss the case and the court can only hear the case as filed by the OAG.

Camacho vacated the jury trial set at the Rota courthouse for Jan. 10, 2017.

In the government's voluntary dismissal of the case, assistant attorney general Betsy Weintraub said the alleged victim and the witnesses in the case reside on Rota, and the OAG has had no opportunity to interview them in person.

Weintraub said the government has also received information about the alleged victim that requires further investigation to determine whether prosecuting Manglona is in the best interest of justice.

Weintraub said both the prosecution and the defense have sought continuance of the trial but the court has denied those requests. Therefore, she said, the government voluntarily dismisses the case.

The prosecutor added that defense counsel Brien Sers Nicholas states that they don't oppose the dismissal.

On Tuesday, four weeks before the trial, Weintraub filed a motion to continue the trial, citing various reasons, including that she is going off-island.

On Wednesday, Camacho denied the government's motion to continue the trial.

Camacho said Weintraub's off-island plans will have to be adjusted as it does not outweigh everyone's preparation and readiness to proceed with the trial.

In the alternative, Camacho said, it is four weeks before the trial, which is ample time for someone in the OAG to prepare for the trial.

The OAG charged Manglona with two counts of sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree and one count of disturbing the peace. The defendant pleaded not guilty of the charges.

The OAG alleged that Manglona sexually abused the 14-year-old girl last July and Aug. 11, 2016, on Rota. The girl told police that the defendant has been sexually abusing her since she was 9. ***(Ferdie dela Torre)***

OAG disqualified from prosecuting Zarones

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho has disqualified the Office of the Attorney General from prosecuting Chief Solicitor James J. Zarones' traffic case, citing conflict.

» Judge orders appointment of special prosecutor to be paid by OAG

Camacho ordered the clerk of court yesterday to go through the list of NMI Bar members and see if anyone is willing to be a special prosecutor in the case.

Any special prosecutor who takes up the case will be paid by the OAG at the regular rate, Camacho said.

The judge ruled that the OAG cannot prosecute one of its own. Camacho said OAG cannot represent the prosecution while at the same time the defendant also represents OAG as the chief solicitor.

At the hearing, assistant attorney general Jonathan Robert Glass Jr. appeared for the government. Zarones appeared by himself.

Camacho said Zarones is still an employee of the OAG, who answers to Attorney General Edward Manibusan.

The judge said the law does allow the OAG to represent multiple parties. However, Camacho said, in this case OAG is not representing both the government and Zarones. He said the OAG is prosecuting Zarones.

Camacho noted that it does happen from time to time that OAG employees do get payable traffic tickets, but that getting a traffic ticket does not immediately create a conflict.

Camacho said if Zarones had appeared at the courthouse and simply paid his fine, no

See OAG on Next Page

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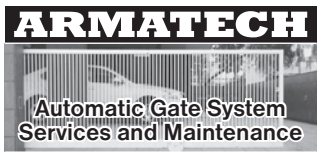

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Mobil raises gas prices by 20 cents

Mobil Oil Marianas Inc. raised its gas prices by 20 cents across the board for the third time in the fourth quarter of 2016

Mobil's regular gas is now $3.94 a liter, premium is at $4.31, and diesel is at $4.12 as of this week.

Shell Marianas is expected to follow suit.

A taxi driver who was filling up said that he refills his tank usually every three days.

"For every $60, it goes for about three days. I think it will be about two and a half days now that the prices have gone up," he said.

During busy days, he expects only a little more than two days for $60 worth of gas.

Prices of gas are always a concern, he said.

"I don't really think that gas price rising is a good thing. It affects everybody. The lower the gas prices, the better for me."

A driver filling up his 1990 pickup said it usually depends on what kind of car you drive.

"Every two weeks, I fill my car up with $25 gas. I ride an old pickup, to and from work. So it actually depends on the car," he said.

He said the gas price hike really isn't an issue for him.

An operator of a boat used for tourists known as a Sea Walker was also not disturbed by the increase in gas prices.

"It's something normal for Saipan—sometimes it goes up, sometimes it goes down. It's not really a problem. It's something that people are already used to, so it doesn't bother me," he said.

He usually fills it up with about $20 worth of gas. ***(Erwin Encinares)***

BOE

From Page 1

What used to be debt of only around $4 million has ballooned to $10.3 million, as confirmed by Federal Programs officer Tim Thornburgh.

The discussion of the debt started when BOE member Marylou Ada asked, "Why did we stop asking for the maintenance-of-effort funding?"

BOE chair Herman Guerrero replied they never did. The CNMI Constitution states that at least 25 percent of CNMI general revenues is to be appropriated to the budget of PSS.

"The problem with some members of the Legislature is they keep thinking that the 25 percent is the max they can give us. I said no, that is not the intent of the Constitution. That's the minimum; it cannot go below but it can go up. There is still resistance with the members—even the current ones—that still don't think we need the funds," he said.

"I think that's why we need to include it in our budget submission—what the schools identify as their basic needs—including Capital Improvement Projects, so that the Legislature knows that we are not lying when we throw it out there because they think we have too much money and don't need to address [maintenance-of-effort]," he added.

Ada suggested to Guerrero that the CNMI government should be reminded of this debt.

"I think it has been a quiet issue and we should start revisiting that and start making a dialogue with the Legislature and the governor because it is an unresolved issue—we've been talking about this for years," she said. "We got to bring this back up to the table so that whatever the government owes us they pay us because revenues are up. We need that money to fix our infrastructure."

Ada said that the issue has been going on ever since she first joined the BOE, which was seven years ago. Talk of a lawsuit against the CNMI government has even come up.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

DIVERT

From Page 1

activities and other exercises.

Senate President Francisco M. Borja (independent), and Republican Party Sens. Jude U. Hofschneider and Francisco Q. Cruz are united in saying the divert plan would bring economic development to the island that would be beneficial to the people of Tinian.

Borja said the Tinian leadership had already decided before that two-thirds of Tinian would be leased by the military. "That has been the decision of the leadership before that the divert airfield should be on Tinian."

"This would at least help us in our economy and hopefully the military would also build additional infrastructure that will be shared with the community," added Borja, who, along with Rep. Edwin P. Aldan, was re-elected under the local GOP banner to represent Tinian in the CNMI Legislature.

He said the military should also stay true to its original plan of using no high-powered munitions and ordnances in their activities.

"As long as the purpose is for divert activities, they have our full support."

"That's why we don't want the [Commonwealth Joint Military Training] combined with the divert airfield, because they are in different groups," added Borja. The CJMT's proposed military buildup for Tinian include a live-fire training facility, which the CNMI government opposes.

"Hopefully, we would soon see the development so they could also help the Tinian economy [and] improve some of the infrastructures at the Tinian airport," added Borja, who is also a former mayor of the municipality.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

EX-ROTA

From Page 1

nine-month prison term.

Dennis Atalig Taisacan pleaded guilty to assault and battery (domestic violence) and violation of court's order of protection as part of a plea deal.

He signed the plea deal on Monday, the day of his scheduled bench trial.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho sentenced Taisacan to two years in prison, all suspended except for nine months, with credit for 83 days of time served.

After serving his sentence, Taisacan will be on probation for two years. He was required to pay a $500 fine plus $25 in court cost and restitution.

Taisacan was ordered to attend alcohol counseling and batterer's intervention. He is prohibited from possessing any firearms and using any alcoholic He was required to complete 100 hours of community service.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Taisacan last July 18 with assault and battery (domestic violence) and disturbing the peace.

The OAG then charged Taisacan last Aug. 29 with violation of order of protection, disturbing the peace, and criminal trespass.

Taisacan pleaded guilty to assault and battery and violation of order for protection. The other charges were dropped. His lawyer in the case is Matthew Gregory.

Taisacan hit his wife in the head with a butane gas canister last July 10 on Saipan.

Also, despite a court order that directed him to stay away from his wife, Taisacan contacted her. She filed the petition on July 20, 2016.

Police detective Peter A. Aldan revealed in his report that it was former Saipan police officer Victor Val Hocog who posted bail for Taisacan in his previous domestic violence case.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

YAMAMOTO

From Page 1

dian services from October to December 2016.

The U.S. Marshal Service seized M/V *Luta* soon after Yamamoto filed the lawsuit last Oct. 25 and appointed National Maritime Services to be its custodian.

Yamamoto, through Hasselback, asked the federal court yesterday not to order him to immediately pay custodian services for the ship.

Two companies and crewmembers of M/V *Luta* have joined as intervenors in the lawsuit.

Norton Lilly, an Alabama corporation, recently sought to collect $131,801.10 from M/V *Luta*, in alleged unpaid goods and services.

The captain and six other crewmembers of M/V *Luta* have also alleged that they have not been paid wages in the minimum of $183,647.77.

Long Consulting LLC, a limited liability company, also claims to have a maritime lien on M/V *Luta* after the vessel's owners allegedly failed to repay their $300,000 loan.

In Yamamoto's response to National Maritime Services' demand of immediate payment, Hasselback said they oppose it in that it would place the entire burden of immediate payment solely upon Yamamoto.

Hasselback cited that Local Admiralty Rule 11(b) states that "an intervenor shall owe a debt to any party that has previously advanced funds to cover the expenses of the marshal, enforceable on motion, consisting of the intervenor's share of the marshal's fees and expenses in the proportion that the intervenor's claim bears to the sum of all the claims."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

OAG

From Page 3

conflict would have arisen.

However, the judge said, Zarones appeared at the traffic arraignment date and entered a not-guilty plea, and is contesting the ticket.

Camacho said a conflict arose because the OAG is constitutionally responsible for the prosecution of traffic cases and Zarones is the chief solicitor.

Camacho said the moment Zarones contested his traffic ticket, the case became adversarial.

Camacho expressed concern that there appears to be a lot of emotionally charged language between Zarones and Glass.

"To have the Office of the Attorney General now select a special prosecutor might only add to the conflict or the appearance of a conflict," he pointed out.

Camacho said the remaining motions will not be addressed until a special prosecutor is appointed.

Camacho set the bench trial for Dec. 21, 2016, at 2:30pm.

Zarones' last day as an employee of the OAG Civil Division will be on Dec. 26, 2016.

Zarones is accused of violating 9 CMC Section 5352(a) or failure to yield the right of way to another motorist. The traffic citation was issued by a police officer on Oct. 5, 2016. Normally, the penalty for such infraction is only a $25 fine.

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JKPL holds fundraiser for Karidat

In the spirit of Christmas, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, as well as the Friends of Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, is conducting a monthlong fundraiser for Karidat Social Services, a domestic relief shelter stationed on Saipan. Both the library and association are on the lookout for clothes, canned food, and toys.

This will be the first time the public library will hold a clothes, canned food, and toy drive. They are accepting anything the community can donate as long as the items are in good condition.

According to Ray Jr. Deleon Guerrero, a library assistant at JKPL, they started doing the clothes/canned food drive for the first time this year in April in celebration of National Library Month.

"So, also to celebrate our 25th anniversary this month, we are doing the Clothes For Good/Canned Food drive, this time with Toys For Good drive, with all proceeds going to the Karidat Social Services.

"Our goal is to accumulate as much as we can and as much as people are willing to donate. Overall, this is for people and children who are in need so it would be great to also help them to celebrate Christmas," said Deleon Guerrero. "The event is very important because, for one, the donations drive is to help support the underprivileged and those in need in the CNMI. Secondly, it helps us celebrate JKPL's 25th anniversary, in the spirit of Christmas,"

Erlinda Naputi, the acting director for the library, said, "JKPL relies on the community for support in times of needs. I feel that the canned drive spearheaded by my colleague Ray DlGuerrero JR is a way to show appreciation and to give back to our community in need. Although there are many agencies and organization that help families in need, we chose Karidat [as our beneficiary] as they are always ready to assist when needed." ***(Michael Santos)***

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Matua Riders pose with children and staff of the Children's Pediatric Ward and Nursing stations at the Commonwealth Health Center during the group's annual Christmas Spirit Bike Run in Garapan on Dec. 10.

Group gives away 150 gift bags in Christmas Run

By MICHAEL T SANTOS
michael.santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Matua Riders Motorcycle Club distributed 150 gift bags around the island for this year's Christmas Spirit Bike Run.

The bike run made several stops this year, from the *Man'amko* Center and the Children's Pediatric Ward and nursing stations at the hospital, to Karidat Social Services and families at the Garapan Annex and Koberville Estate.

Marie Salas-Igitol, who is secretary of MRMC, said, "The holiday is a source of happiness, the time to connect with people we often do not see so much during the year, to celebrate with those we love and cherish and remember those that are no longer with us. … Although the holiday does not provide everyone with the warmth and joy that it does for me, I believe that the spirits of compassion and giving become even more important to share with those we encounter that aren't feeling the love."

A total of 150 gift bags were filled with stuffed animals and goodies for the children at the Children's Pediatric Ward and children at the housing areas. On top of that, 81 fruit basket arrangements were given away—76 to the *mam'amko* as well as a $500 donation and two gift certificates from Kanoa Resort for the December *man'amko* king and queen. Five fruit baskets and five fruit bags were also given to each nurse's stations at the hospital.

"It doesn't take a huge gesture to share the season; sometimes the smallest acts carry the biggest weight. Having said that, I am forever grateful to our club members, the businesses who generously donated and supported us, and the volunteers for without them our Christmas Run would not have been made possible," Igitol said.

Rita Indalecio Reyes, president of the *man'amko*, said, "I feel very grateful for the Matua Riders. It's not just the items they bring to us; it's the thought behind it. Plus they spend time with us year after year and to me, that means a lot."

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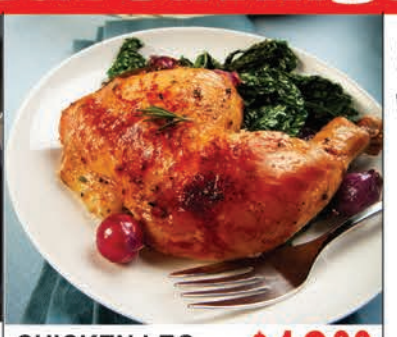

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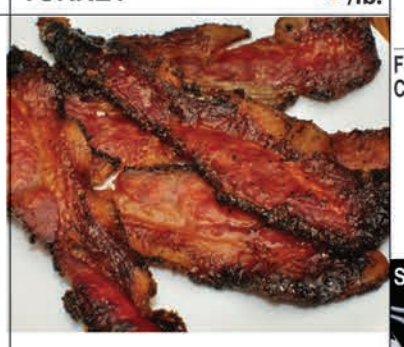

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Masga appointed as deputy chief of DFEMS Tinian

Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas recently appointed former Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission chair Matthew C. Masga to serve as resident deputy commissioner of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services for the Municipality of Tinian.

Masga previously served as a detective in the Tinian Department of Public Safety. Masga later served as the resident department head for the Department of Commerce under mayors Francisco M. Borja and Jose P. San Nicolas.

From 2010 to 2012 Masga was the local representative for Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP). In 2012, then-mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz appointed Masga to the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission where he served as chairman until late 2015.

"I have confidence in Mr. Masga's ability to move the department forward. As a veteran law enforcement officer and with his extensive leadership experience, Mr. Masga will make an excellent addition to the DFEMS leadership," said San Nicolas.

According to San Nicolas, he has already spoken to DFEMS Commissioner Clyde Norita who has pledged to work closely with Masga.

Masga's appointment to DFEMS was submitted to the 15th Tinian Municipal Council chair Raynaldo Cing for the council's advice and consent. If confirmed Masga will serve out the balance of San Nicolas' term, which expires in January 2018. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

GCA Christmas program today

The public is invited to Grace Christian Academy's Elementary Department Christmas Program to be held today, Dec. 16, at 6pm at the GCA Auditorium on Navy Hill. The program, "A Rockin' Royal Christmas," was created by Celeste Clydesdale. ***(PR)***

Wage and salary statement workshop today

The Division of Revenue and Taxation, Department of Finance will be conducting a workshop for the Annual Wage and Salary Statement, Form (W-2CM) for tax year 2016 and other 2016 year-end filing requirements. The workshop will be today, Dec. 16, 2016. The first seminar will be from 8am to 11am and the second will be from 1pm to 4pm at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. Confirm your attendance by calling the Division of Revenue and Taxation at 664-1000 and 664-1098 or fax at 664-1015. ***(PR)***

San Nicolas pushes interim solution to landfill problem

In a continued to effort to address Tinian's solid waste management issue, Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas convened the second stakeholders meeting at the Office of the Governor on Wednesday to give an update on the status of the transfer station and to push for an interim solution to cap the non-compliant municipal dump, which currently sits on public lands leased to the Alter City Group.

The mayor invited representatives of various agencies whose cooperation and support are needed to be able to fast-track the implementation of his proposed interim solution as well as representatives of Bridge Investment Group and the Alter City Group, whose proposed development would increase the amount of waste generated on the island of Tinian.

"We are well on our way to building a transfer station with the assistance of the [Capital Improvement Project] office. In the meantime, where we plan to temporarily stage and sort our trash while the transfer station is being built requires CRM [Coastal Resources Management] approval, ensuring compliance with [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency] requirements, temporary designation of public lands from [the Department of Public Lands] to the municipality to stage and sort specific types of waste, and [Department of Public Works'] support through designation of solid waste management funds for the transfer of waste to the Saipan landfill," said San Nicolas.

"The reason for calling for the second stakeholder meeting is to bring all regulatory agencies and affected parties together to have a meeting of the minds about how we can work together and move this project forward for the benefit of our community."

San Nicolas proposes to use the old MDC maintenance and repair building on Tinian to temporarily sort and process for shipment of waste.

"This site is ideal because there is a large butler building there with a concrete floor which requires minimal amount to renovate. This concrete floored building is essential to meeting CRM requirements that the waste be properly contained and that seepage does not contaminate the ground."

The mayor also stated that for this interim solution to be successful, the Tinian community must be aggressively educated as to how to properly sort and dispose household waste to the temporary staging area as well as separating recyclables, green waste and household hazardous waste.

"We will launch an aggressive community awareness program as to how the community can all pitch in to make this work. We need them to be involved to make it work seamlessly. We need to address this issue to be able to move any of our developments forward." ***(PR)***

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a toy drive. There are designated drop-off boxes at a few locations: at the reception area on the third floor of the Bank of Guam building and at the Finance Department. And to promote the charitable act of gift-giving to those in needed within all IPI casino staff, a drop-off box can also be found at the employee lounge located at the casino.

All IPI employees are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys during regular business hours from Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, between the hours of 8am to 5pm. The deadline for the toy drive is Dec. 16, 2016. (***PR***)

'LIGHT UP THE NIGHT HOLIDAY WALK 'N ROLL'

Public invited to today's wellness fundraiser

Imperial Pacific International, Ltd. will be holding today, Friday (*not yesterday as earlier reported*) its first annual wellness event, "Light up the Night Holiday Walk 'N Roll."

This is a two-hour event that will begin at 6pm at the Garapan Fishing Base. Registration will be from 3:30pm to 5:30pm.

This event is meant to encourage wellness activities and a healthier lifestyle within the workplace and encourage community involvement in the campaign of healthy living.

Geri Dela Cruz, Imperial Pacific International's executive director for Corporate Social Responsibility, said, "This event initially started off as a wellness program; however, after collaboration with Ayuda Network, it became more of a fundraiser with which the proceeds will aid underprivileged families receive gifts this Christmas."

Helping conceive the idea of bringing together the fundraiser in time for the Christmas season, Franchesca Tomokane, former CSR representative, said, "I have always envisioned a solution to help underprivileged children feel loved during the holidays. What better way to make it happen than to have a walk-athon to raise funds for this Christmas."

"With the leadership of [Dela Cruz] and the help of the CSR team, and in collaboration with Ayuda Network, this was all made possible, and I'm so excited to be a part of the event, as well as anticipating and seeing the outcome of it."

The "Light up the Night Holiday Wak 'N Roll" will start at the Garapan Fishing Base and all the way to the Quartermaster Tank and back. Registration will be from 3:30pm to 5:30pm with the option to pay the registration fee of $10 or waive the fee by contributing a gift with a price value ranging from $5 to $10. There will be refreshments and water provided to all participants.

There will be a judging competition consisting of the "Most Lit Outfit of the Night," which will be inclusive of the contestant's own props. There are prizes at stake for first, second, and third place winners. All proceeds from the event will be used to purchase Christmas gifts for children.

In line with this, Imperial Pacific will also be setting up

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NMI Dems in the midst of reconstitution

The CNMI Democratic Party held its general membership meeting in June of this year. At the meeting, the membership elected 20 members of the Central Executive Committee and chose party officers. The Central Executive Committee has been meeting regularly since then, working in small groups to reconstitute, realign, and clearly articulate the party's philosophy and values to meet the challenges of our changing times and the reality of the millennial generation's demands.

The working groups have been laboring hard in their subject areas. Similar tasks are ongoing, including the appointment of former judge Herb Soll last Saturday, Dec. 10, 2016, to head the Gubernatorial Search Committee. The results of their efforts will be presented for ratification at a general membership meeting in a convention-like format on March 4, 2017.

Once the organizational and governing policies, procedures and by-laws of the party are ratified by the convention delegates, a re-chartering process will follow to meet the requirements of applicable statutes and regulations.

Since the 1998 general election, the party has not been able to achieve the successes that it previously enjoyed. The party had been a serious political contender, electing two governors, but for the past 32 years the Republican and Covenant parties have dominated and controlled the lives of our citizens. They have had a nearly unfettered reign of power over all matters affecting the livelihood of our people.

In the 32 years of Republican/Covenant administration, the Commonwealth has experienced many serious problems caused by unprincipled leaders who defied the will of our citizens, and by a lack of appreciation of the consequences of their actions. We recall the impeachment of a sitting governor, who resigned in disgrace; the criminal conviction of a lieutenant governor; the death spiral and ultimate demise of the NMI Retirement Fund, which caused thousands of our hard-working government employees to lose their retirement security for which they worked so hard; various malfeasant acts of department heads; and the bankruptcy of the Saipan credit union.

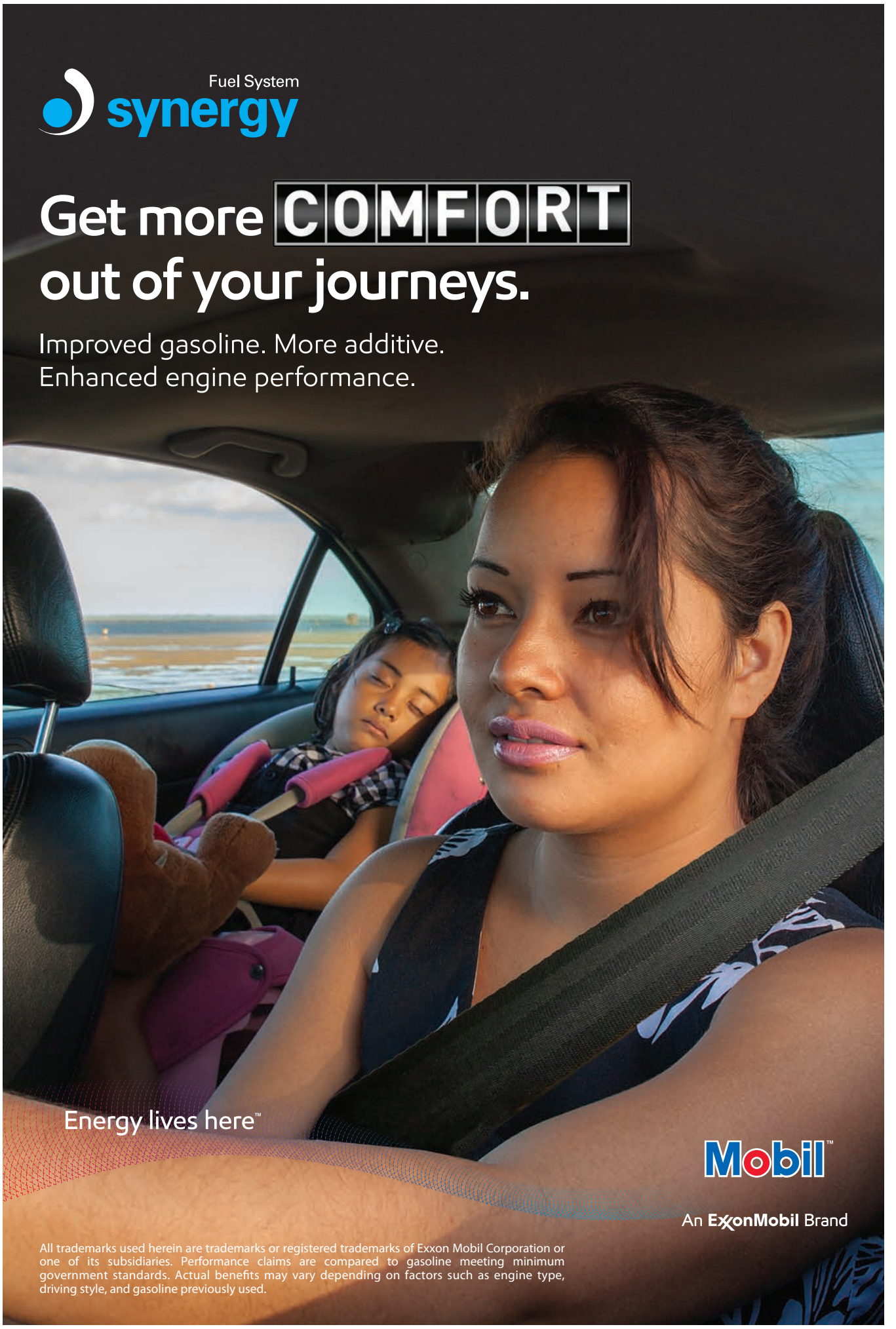
Our Constitution is supposed to be the guiding principles of our leaders' playbook; unfortunately it's been used to promote and advance selfish political agenda. If one looks at how dispositions of public lands are decided, it makes you question seriously, whose constitutional interests are being protected and advanced. Collectively, the people have not been consulted on major decisions affecting us, and when they have been consulted, the will of the people has been trumped and cast aside. These are just a few of many disgraceful and despicable acts that have occurred during the Republican/Covenant regime.

Had the Democratic Party been able to reorganize and put aside its internal differences, providing a hopeful alternative for our citizens, perhaps the political and social consequences would not have been as unfortunate as it has been under the Republican/Covenant leadership.

The efforts currently being undertaken by our Central Executive Committee members are undertaken with those past experiences in mind. We do this to accentuate those affirmative values that characterize the party's organizational greatness and political competitiveness, so that our citizens will have a viable and convincing choice of political parties. The future welfare of the people of the CNMI demands no less.

To members of our community who are looking for a viable political force and are interested in being part of a new political movement for change, not only are you openly welcome, your contribution and membership are truly valued. Please call any of these numbers for information and registration (670) 989-8526 or 287-4536.

On behalf of the Democratic Party of the Northern Marianas, we extend our profound appreciation to the hardworking groups of our Central Executive Committee members who cared enough and tirelessly volunteered their time to begin the process for reconstituting our party, the peoples' party. May the celebration and spirit of Christmas bring good tidings and joy to all our citizens in the Commonwealth. ***(PR)***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NMC Rota, Tinian directors named

Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez announced yesterday the appointments of Maria Aguon and Martin Mendiola as executive directors who will head the operations of the institution's centers on Tinian and Rota, respectively.

"Maria and Martin's new roles on Tinian and Rota are part of our ongoing efforts to expand the college's operations on these islands and to ensure that local workforce and educational needs are being addressed comprehensively," said Fernandez.

Aguon

Mendiola

Prior to her new role, Aguon served as the NMC Project Proa director and also program coordinator of the Tinian campus instructional site. In her new role, she will oversee activities including student services on Tinian, training activities that include those provided through distance learning, and outreach activities on Tinian.

She will also be leading efforts to promote the Prior Learning Assessment Program, which awards college credit for verifiable knowledge gained from employment training programs, military service, and independent study.

"I am very much looking forward to engaging the community of the Tinian in this new capacity," said Aguon.

Mendiola is no stranger to NMC. He has worked as NMC Rota's campus administrator until he left in 2010 to work as the Rota port manager for the Commonwealth Ports Authority. In his new role, he will oversee activities on Rota that aim to advance the mission of the college in making quality education and training available and accessible to the people of Rota.

"We will be working hard to make the campus on Rota the central hub of activity for the Rota community," said Mendiola, who will start his new post at NMC on Dec. 19, 2016.

"I am confident that Maria and Martin's leadership on Tinian and Rota will result in continued growth and expansion as we help residents meet their educational goals," added Fernandez. ***(NMC)***

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

The questions Rex Tillerson must answer to become secretary of state

AP

In this Friday, March 27, 2015 file photo, ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson delivers remarks on the release of a report by the National Petroleum Council on oil drilling in the Arctic, in Washington.

U.S. senators—Republicans as well as Democrats—plan to grill Rex Tillerson, President-elect Donald Trump's secretary of state pick. They had better. The Exxon Mobil CEO should have to pass muster on some crucial questions to become the nation's chief diplomat.

One is Tillerson's close ties with Russia, which the CIA says tried to tip the election in Trump's favor. Tillerson would be another friend of Vladimir Putin in Trump's inner circle but would be the first who received the Order of Friendship from the Kremlin.

Another is Tillerson's career with the world's largest oil company. While he isn't a skeptic of man-made climate change like Trump, Exxon is accused of trying to bury scientific evidence of global warming.

Given Trump's lack of foreign policy knowledge, this is one of his most consequential Cabinet picks. He needs a secretary of state who knows the world of diplomacy and can curb his shoot-from-the-hip impulses.

Tillerson, however, personifies some of the worst trends in Trump's Cabinet nominees. Too many of his appointees are from Wall Street and corporate board rooms.

Trump appears not to understand the importance of separating his business interests from the national interest. Tillerson would go into office with a ready-made conflict of interest. Exxon signed a deal, which could be worth tens of billions of dollars, with the Russian state oil company to drill in Siberia. That deal, however, is frozen by U.S. sanctions—which Tillerson has criticized—imposed after Putin's regime annexed Crimea and started its shadow war in Ukraine.

See TILLERSON on Next Page

Two essential books for Mandarin

By ED STEPHENS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

In a very brief interval between eating holiday cake and having holiday cookies, I managed to tidy up my bookshelves so they can face the New Year. Some books have been banished to the garage. Others, having been in holding patterns in various and sundry places, are finally getting shelf space. As the years go by and this cycle repeats itself, a diminishing number of books remain on the shelves without getting moved or removed.

As for the coming New Year, I know several people who are facing it with a resolve to study Mandarin. Hey, I seem to say that every year this decade. And why not? I'm not aiming for novelty on this point. I'm just aiming for practicality. And, in the CNMI and elsewhere, you'll agree that Mandarin is one very practical language.

But that doesn't mean that all the books about Mandarin are particularly practical. For those who are going to be buying some books, maybe for themselves, or maybe as Santa, I figured I'd mention two reference books that I've found essential. This pair of veterans has survived every purge of my bookshelf.

One such veteran is the *Oxford Beginner's Chinese Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 498 pages, $15.95). This is more than just a dictionary; it also incorporates some "explainers" that cover key elements of the language. It's also worth noting that the font size and layout are easy on the eyes, and that's no small matter when you're dealing with Chinese dictionaries.

I don't know, nor do I care, how many words are in the dictionary. It's not intended to have a vast inventory of words; there are plenty of other dictionaries that can do that. After all, sometimes a vast inventory is what we need. But I've found out the hard way that Chinese seems to have 30 ways of saying the same thing, or almost the same thing. As a result, when I want to say something, picking from a vast array of choices means I wind up using words that are probably the Chinese equivalents of "betroth" and "wherefore," or, well, something like that. This isn't street-level fare, and it's not fare I have any business serving with my Tarzan level of speaking.

None of these awkward terms came from the Oxford Beginner's Chinese Dictionary. So when I'm fishing for a word to use, I have redoubled my resolve to use this dictionary as my first resource. If I can't find what I need, I'll list a few possible candidates from other sources, but I'll ask a native speaker for help before putting any such words on active duty. My days of mining random dictionaries for vocabulary are over; I thought I was being a scholar but I was just being a doofus.

I'm not suggesting that books that build vocabulary aren't useful. To the contrary, many of them are quite useful. Still, the *Oxford Beginner's Chinese Dictionary* has proven to be a reliable companion.

I'll now mention another veteran that has served me well. This is a skinny little book titled *Basic Patterns of Chinese Grammar* (Stone Bridge Press, 127 pages, $12.95), written by Qin Xue Herzberg and Larry Herzberg.

This is a simple, plain-language guide to basic grammar. It doesn't have any academic mumbo-jumbo. It doesn't have anything that's not important, either. Everything in the book is practical. It's an ingenious exercise in distilling a big, foggy subject (Chinese grammar!) into the fewest possible essential tidbits. If you like grammar, you'll like this book; if you hate grammar, you'll *love* this book.

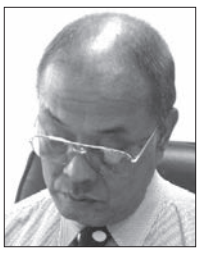
Of course, just like the *Oxford Beginner's Chinese Dictionary*, *Basic Patterns of Chinese Grammar* is not an exhaustive reference. It's for students to get some momentum going. After that point, there are plenty of heavy, ponderous, and complex references awaiting the ambitious. But Mandarin is a difficult language, so just getting to "that point" takes a measure of ambition to begin with.

Some of my pals are watching more and more Chinese customers coming their way, and they're also seeing more and more opportunities lost as they grapple with language barriers. On this note, I think that the notion of achieving "fluency" is a false standard to argue about. One thing I noticed in the tourism industry is that having even a meager 300-word ability in a customer's language can make the critical difference in cementing good relations. I've seen this make the difference between getting a job or not getting a job. I've seen this make the difference between getting investors and not getting investors. If you're at the leading edge of an evolving market, little things can make a big difference.

Well, such is yet another take on Mandarin resources. Now if you'll excuse me, having just finished my holiday cookies, it's time for me to follow up with some dessert.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The poker syndrome



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

The "poker syndrome" is simply the reckless betting of anything without careful review. Never mind what happens later. It's the here and now! This is the way things are done here in ad hoc fashion—no planning—sing it, "*que sera, sera.*"

I was expecting a more thoughtful approach especially when it comes down to shoring up the financial posture of the NMI. It should prepare the local treasury to meet fiscal duties paying for public services. At least this is the ideal thing to do. It was what we hoped for over the last year.

We've failed by skipping taxing Best Sunshine's "staggering" $13.5 billion income it raked in last year. Moreover, it's making $3.9 billion per month today and lapdogs refuse to impose taxes!

Now, it is rumored that Raffy and Republican cabal are going to borrow some $120 million to cover the needs of the settlement fund. It's another political gimmick to lure retirees' votes for 2018. The bond loan would take 30 years to pay off. What happens after 2018? Is it right to pass this debt or leadership failure to our young people?

You had the opportunity to collect some $675 million had you taxed BSI's largesse of $13.5 billion. But you turned your head the other way saying, "It's a bad time to tax." Now you want to force a debt against our young people for the next 30 years?

The poker syndrome is egregiously irresponsible! If the solutions driven team is so hot, why force debts on the backs of the young people by another $120 million? How about using what's known as "economic efficiency" prioritizing spending funds where it would do the most good?

But then it is rumored that most of the elected elite are paid lapdogs of a certain firm here. No wonder "it's not the time to tax" them. Who do you represent anyway?

Moreover, have you pared down the $779 million owed the old retirement fund, the $30 million debt with CUC, land compensation and other vendor obligations?

Have you fulfilled constitutional mandate to retire NMI deficit this year? If not, isn't this a constitutional violation? No worries, we will litigate it to force restoration of a government of laws! What's the current and cumulative deficit of the NMI?

Wobbly industry

Some feel disturbed by Bloomberg's stories about the casino industry here raking in "staggering" largesse. As a journalist, I trust Bloomberg's report given that it is equipped with its own intelligence and investigative groups on issues of global interest.

Yesterday, Bloomberg carried a story about the approval of Japan's casino plans by the Diet. Japan is set to open its own doors to "opulent gambling houses" revolving around the integrated resort concept. The "multi-billion dollar goliaths are designed to lure out-of-towners and offer them a variety of ways to spend—shows, shopping, baroque dining—beyond gambling. This model generally makes casinos more profitable, less dependent on high rollers, and better able to withstand economic ebbs and flows. It's projected to generate $10 billion annually.

"For governments, too, it's an appealing prospect. In theory, foreigners will drop their cash, boost the local economy and take their problems home with them. Developers can be prodded to improve local infrastructure and to include space for conferences and exhibitions. This is what Japan has in mind.

"It's a hard dynamic to sustain. For one thing, the Asia-Pacific region is already brimming with such resorts, from Singapore to Saipan, Vietnam to Vladivostok. New ones are on the way in the Philippines and South Korea. Macau has some three-dozen and counting.

"Studies show that increased regional competition can drive down revenue for established casinos, as you might expect, and drawing out-of-towners becomes much harder when they have options closer to home. As the U.S. has lately learned, this leads to some very unhappy endings for areas that can't compete.

"Another problem is that many of these new resorts are pursuing the same customer: the Chinese tourist. With China's economic growth sluggish and the yuan weakening, that's not the sure bet it once was. The Chinese government is cracking down on foreign casino companies trying to recruit local gamblers. And it is keen to discourage capital flight, which means it may further tighten rules on spending overseas.

"Even under the best conditions, moreover, casinos rarely live up to the hype. Although they can produce a short-term economic boost, on average the effect dies out quickly. Taxing gambling might seem like a painless way to bolster budgets, but casinos can actually be a net drag on public revenue when social costs are factored in. What public income they do collect tends to be regressive. Without precautions, they can lead to a host of other ills, including lower property values, increased problem gambling, higher bankruptcy rates and more crime."

While we prematurely boast of economic "boom", take a critical look around you and see if the Triple Wall of disinvestment isn't going to drain scarce revenues hailing from the swamp of your shallow understanding of events unfolding near and far.

More losses: Next year, the NMI would lose Medicaid funding, SNAP, housing assistance, and grant funds for NMI agencies. As this occurs, notice that investments have started heading south. It's the impending results of bad decision calls, contributing to our own financial demise.

We could try putting another believable *mea culpa* appeals but Washington isn't going to listen and not when it knows we simply failed to tax billions of dollars in casino revenues. Imagine what the U.S. casino industry and their representatives in Congress would say about our excesses. Would other states struggling to establish jobs for their people be generous to filthy rich spoiled brats? Take a closer look at the relationship between Trump and Jinping. *Halo*?

TILLERMAN

From Page 16

What's good for Exxon is not necessarily good for America. Where will Tillerson's loyalties lie? Investors answered that question by driving up Exxon's stock price by nearly 2 percent on Tuesday, a bump that, based on the 2.6 million-plus shares owned by Tillerson, according to Nasdaq, added some $9.4 million to his personal net worth.

Trump and others backing Tillerson say he would make great deals for America. But the post also means standing up for our values and for human rights.

"The next secretary of state must be someone who views the world with moral clarity, is free of potential conflicts of interest, has a clear sense of America's interests and will be a forceful advocate for America's foreign policy goals," said Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, which will hold the confirmation hearings.

If senators conclude Tillerson does not meet that standard, they should not be afraid to reject his nomination and force Trump to find someone better.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Helping people with addictions

A few months back, Judge Kenneth Govendo stated that every indigenous island family has been affected by ice (methamphetamine) in some way. He was right. The judge might have included alcohol also, because its use is so widespread in our community.

On Dec. 9, a group of individuals—police officers, citizens, and Santa Claus—held a little gathering at the Superior courthouse. The purpose of the group was to "raise awareness" about drunk driving.

Two days later, on Dec. 11, a fatal car crash occurred on Pale Arnold Road, near the zoo. Two vehicles were racing and they crashed. Lives were lost; passengers were seriously injured. Alcohol was a factor.

The problems arising from drug and alcohol abuse are well established, and we don't need any more "awareness" gatherings. What the Commonwealth needs, most of all, are solutions.

Many people believe that a person who drinks regularly has a character flaw or defect. This is not the case: alcoholism, or addiction to ice, is a disease, and should be treated as such.

All addictions are the same: there is a craving to "fill a hole" in the addicted brain. Whether the hole is filled by alcohol, or ice, or sex, or gambling, it never goes away. There is no cure for addiction, but there are remedies. However, in the end, it is up to the individual. It is not easy, but it's possible.

According to Alcoholics Anonymous, the First Step states, "We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and that our lives had become unmanageable."

This could also include other addictions, because once a person become addicted, the addiction takes over. The individual is in the back seat of his own car; his addiction is at the wheel.

When I was a deacon in a NYC church I heard two alcoholics talking. One asked, "What's your favorite drink?" The reply was, "The next one!"

Interventions

Because there are no residential treatment facilities in the Commonwealth, the task of helping the addict falls to the family members. An effective strategy is by holding an intervention.

An intervention goes like this: the family members gather in a living room and the addicted person is brought in. A spokesman for the groups tells the addict, "We know that you have a problem and we are here to help you, to love you, and to give you all the support we can to help you beat your addiction."

The addict's response is usually one of denial. Or the addict insists, "I can handle it!" But it's too late for denial or excuses: their behavior has given them away: the cat is out of the bag, and the family must be brave, compassionate, and insistent.

Interventions are not intended to blame the addict, but to assure him or her that they are loved, and cared for, and that they will support his recovery efforts 100 percent. The family also puts the addict on notice: they won't put up with it any more.

At the end of the intervention, each family member approaches the addict and gives him a hug. The family has become a support group, one of tough love.

It's a brave and noble family that holds an intervention for a family member. It's an extremely difficult process, but it's necessary. It is necessary because the addict could easily wind up in jail, severely disabled, or dead.

I don't know if there are families brave enough to say "enough is enough!" but I hope there are. A strong and determined family is the last best chance for any addict.

Russ Mason
As Teo, Saipan

Ready to be President?

President-elect Tweety-Bird would do well to stop treating the transition like a reality show and get down to business. A good start would be to attend daily briefings instead of ignoring them. These are dangerous times so he should set aside his denigrating the CIA or any other government agency trying to get at the truth behind the recent election. It isn't just Trump who may have been compromised. It was the entire election process. Enough with persecution complex, President-elect Tweety-Bird. It has grown tiresome. Time to can the theatrics and show the voters who elected you to show the leadership skills you claim to possess and lead!

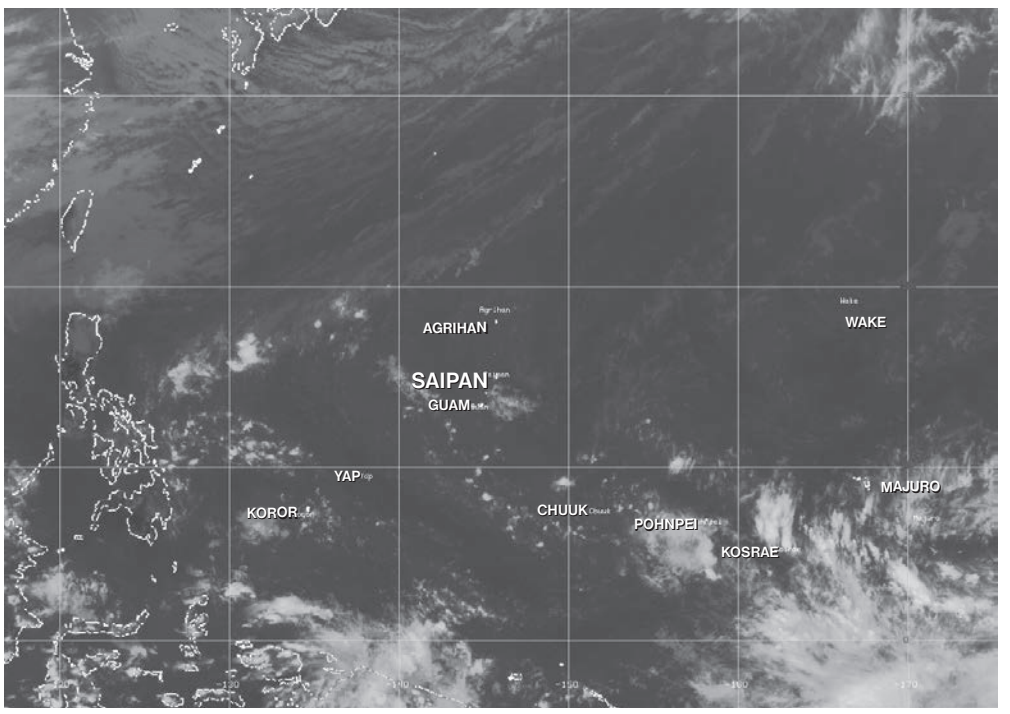
Herb Stark
Mooresville, NC

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼79°	▲88° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°	▲89° ▼79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:00 AM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies with isolated showers and moderate trade winds prevail over the Marianas. Latest buoy data shows seas of 6 to 8 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▼ ▲
Guam and Rota	Partly cloudy	80 / 90 °F
Palau	Afternoon clouds	79 / 87 °F
Yap	Morning clouds	80 / 84 °F
Chuuk	Partly cloudy	82 / 88 °F
Pohnpei	Afternoon clouds	80 / 84 °F
Kosrae	Mostly cloudy	81 / 82 °F
Majuro	Mostly cloudy	81 / 84 °F

AROUND THE GLOBE		▼ ▲
Auckland	Morning clouds	58 / 67 °F
Beijing	High level clouds	15 / 41 °F
Hong Kong	Partly cloudy	54 / 65 °F
Honolulu	Morning clouds	64 / 74 °F
London	Partly cloudy	47 / 51 °F
Los Angeles	Broken clouds	50 / 60 °F
Manila	Mostly cloudy	75 / 81 °F
Melbourne	Sunny	48 / 80 °F
Miami	Partly sunny	71 / 77 °F
New York	Partly sunny	19 / 27 °F
Osaka	Showers	33 / 45 °F
Paris	Partly cloudy	40 / 50 °F
Pusan	Sunny	30 / 44 °F
Rome	Sunny	37 / 55 °F
Salem	Mostly cloudy	24 / 34 °F
San Francisco	Light showers	47 / 54 °F
Seoul	High level clouds	7 / 30 °F
Tokyo	Afternoon clouds	34 / 48 °F
Washington, DC	High level clouds	17 / 29 °F

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		
3:07 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.69 Feet
10:05 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.09 Feet
3:43 PM	LOW TIDE	1.1 Feet
8:32 PM	HIGH TIDE	2.01 Feet

	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Friday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Sunday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Monday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Tuesday	6:38 AM	5:51 PM

	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Friday	-	8:26 AM	8:15 PM
Saturday	-	9:21 AM	9:14 PM
Sunday	-	10:12 AM	10:10 PM
Monday	-	10:58 AM	11:03 PM
Tuesday	-	11:41 AM	11:53 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 5, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:00pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	2:10pm	6:05pm	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	8:55am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
PR1572	5:45am	7:45am	7, 4
UA6391/183	1:30pm	8:50pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/183	1:30pm	9:10pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA6391/193	1:30pm	10:35pm	5 via Rota-GUM-ROR
UA6390/183	2:20pm	8:50pm	2 via GUM
UA6390/183	2:20pm	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA6390/193	2:20pm	10:35pm	2 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6391/159	1:30pm	9:55pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA6390/159	2:20pm	9:55pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

LJ651	7:30am	1:10pm	Daily
7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:05pm	1:55am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR1571	10:25pm	4:45am+1	3, 6
UA192/6395	9:45pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/6395	10:25pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/6395	11:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UA116/6395	9:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju Air; HX: Hong Kong Airlines; LJ: Jin Air; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure;ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Christmas in the Marianas parade on Dec. 17

Students of Agape Christian School share Christmas carols during the Marianas Visitors Authority's Christmas in the Marianas at Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 10, 2016. MVA

Students sing Christmas carols at Christmas in the Marianas at Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 10, 2016. The celebration will return on Dec. 17, 23, and 30, 2016, from 6pm to 10pm. The Marianas Visitors Authority's annual signature event features Christmas caroling, skits, Christmas trees, lights, and more. MVA

A food vendor serves Japanese cuisine at Christmas in the Marianas at Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 10, 2016. Numerous food and game vendors are a part of the annual celebration. MVA

The Marianas Visitors Authority's annual Christmas in the Marianas parade will be held tomorrow, Dec. 17, just after sunset at 6pm, bringing nighttime holiday cheer to downtown Garapan.

The parade route will be from Garapan Fishing Base north along Beach Road to American Memorial Park. From Paseo de Marianas north, Coral Tree Avenue will be closed from 6pm to 10pm Saturday, as floats will be on display along the avenue and at American Memorial Park throughout the evening following the parade.

Scheduled to participate with marching unit or floats in the parade are the MVA, Kagman Elementary School, Northern Marianas International School, San Vicente Elementary School, Saipan Southern High School, Marianas High School, Kagman High School, and Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School. Participants are reminded to assemble at 4:30pm at Garapan Fishing Base.

Following the parade, awards will be given out at 6:30pm to the winning schools for the Christmas caroling and skit competitions held earlier this month, as well as the float competition. Floats will be judged based on originality, relevance of the Christmas theme, use of natural and recyclable material for decorations, and costumes and props. In addition, students will show off their costumes with a Christmas catwalk at Paseo de Marianas beginning at 7pm. Entertainment and Christmas music will continue until 10pm.

Saipan-da Santa, Santa, and Santa's helper dropped by Christmas in the Marianas at Paseo de Marianas in Saipan on Dec. 10, 2016. MVA

"We're looking forward to awarding the students this Saturday for all the hard work and enthusiasm they have put into celebrating Christmas in the Marianas," said MVA Community Projects specialist Ryan Calvo, lead organizer of the event. "Everyone is invited to join us for another great night of food, fun and holiday festivities this Saturday."

The monthlong Christmas in the Marianas, organized by the MVA, PDM Promoters, Inc., Team PDI, and other travel partners, offers weekly holiday entertainment for visitors and residents, alike. Dec. 23 and 30 will feature live performances at Paseo de Marianas. The Japanese Mochitsuki Festival will be held on Dec. 30, marking the pounding of rice to make "mochi," a traditional event in preparation for the new year.

For more information on the event, contact Calvo at rcalvo@mymarianas.com or 664-3200/1 or visit www.mymarianas.com. *(MVA)*

GRAND VRIO RESORT SAIPAN

"Christmas Brunch" on Dec. 23-25, 2016 $25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!!! • "Christmas Cake" For ordering by Dec. 20, 2016; Pick-up $25: Dec. 23-25, 2016

Welcome to enjoy fantastic buffet at our **"Tropicana Restaurant"** (2nd floor of Taga Tower)! Performance is available on Sunday Brunch. All you can eat and drink! Champagne, beers.

*** Breakfast: 7:00am-10:00am * Lunch: 11:30am-2:00pm *Sunday Brunch: 11:00am-2:00pm *Dinner: 5:30pm-9:00pm**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				12/1	12/2 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/3 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*
12/4 **Sunday Brunch $22** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/5	12/6 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/7 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/8	12/9 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/10 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*
12/11 **Sunday Brunch $22** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/12	12/13 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/14 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/15	12/16 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/17 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*
12/18 **Sunday Brunch $22** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/19	12/20 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/21 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/22	12/23 **Christmas Brunch $25** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/24 **Christmas Brunch $25** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*
12/25 **Christmas Brunch $25** *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/26	12/27 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/28 Buffet Lunch $14 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/29	12/30 *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)*	12/31 *Year-end Brunch $25* *Seafood & Sushi Night* *Reg.: $35 (Local: $25)* Count-down Party 10:00 - 00:30

* Our **"Dolphin"** restaurant (10th floor of Crystal Tower in Grandvrio Resort Saipan) has reopened as A-La-Carte restaurant. Welcome to enjoy fast & nice Lunch Menu ($8~) and authentic Japanese Shabu Shabu or Sukiyaki for your dinner ($35). "Spectacular Ocean view and Sunset!" **Starting from Nov. 07, 2016, our Dolphin restaurant brings out "Daily Chef's Special Lunch" from Mon. to Fri.; everyday is different; $12 only, 15 servings per day; First in First Out!** Opening time: Everyday Lunch: 11:30am-2:00pm Last Order: 1:30pm / Dinner 5:30pm-9:00pm Last Order: 8:30pm

* **"Starlight BBQ"** Dinner Buffet Location: Poolside Price: Reg. AD $39 CH: $19 (Local: AD $35/ CH $17) Business hrs: 6:00-9:00pm
Menu: " All you can eat & drink" - beers, red & white wine, soft drinks, oolong tea and juices. **Additional Champagne for Christmas!!!**

* Come and taste delicious curry & sandwich set ($7.00 only), cake, café latte, organic smoothies… with unique ocean view at our "**Airi Coffee Lounge".** Business hrs: 10:00am - 6:00pm
Pizza Set ($10.00) **available now !!**

For reservation or inquiry, please call: 670-237-2527 or E-mail: food.beverage@grandvrio-saipan.com

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High Court affirms judgment in Rosa Camacho case

On Dec. 14, 2016, the Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Rosa B. Camacho v Commonwealth Health Center & Department of Public Health*, 2016 MP 14. The High Court affirmed the trial court's judgment finding the Commonwealth Health Center negligent and awarding Rosa Camacho $100,000 in damages.

In May 2007, Camacho slipped and fell at CHC. Camacho alleged that the slip was due to water on the floor caused by CHC's negligent handling of a leaking water pipe. Following a bench trial, but before a judgment was issued, the sitting judge left the bench and a successor judge was appointed. The successor judge found that CHC violated its duty of care and awarded Camacho $100,000 in damages.

CHC appealed, arguing that the successor judge violated NMI Rule of Civil Procedure 63. CHC further asserted that the court applied the incorrect standard in determining whether CHC breached its duty of care to Camacho.

The Supreme Court first reviewed the Rule 63 requirements. The High Court concluded that the successor judge certified his familiarity with the record, that parties waived their right to recall witnesses, and that the successor court was not otherwise required to recall witnesses.

The Supreme Court determined that the trial court did not abuse its discretion in the certification process, and did not err by failing to recall any witnesses.

The High Court then reviewed the standard of care the trial court applied to determine whether CHC had breached its duty of care. The High Court determined that pursuant to 7 CMC § 3401 the appropriate standard could be found in the Restatement (Second) of Torts. Under the Restatement (Second) of Torts, there are two distinct standards for the duty of care owed to invitees. In the case of hidden dangers, section 343 applies. In the case of known or obvious dangers, section 343A applies. The High Court concluded that the trial court erred by failing to establish which standard it relied on. However, the High Court considered the trial court's factual findings, and found that while the trial court applied an inconsistent standard, had it applied the correct standard CHC would have been found liable. Accordingly, reversal was not warranted, and the Supreme Court affirmed the trial court's judgment in favor of Camacho.

The High Court's full opinion is available at http://www.cnmilaw.org/supreme16.html.

For further information, contact the Supreme Court at 236-9800. ***(NMI Judiciary)***

Marianas Trench on 'Your Humanities Half-Hour'

Angelo Villagomez, Dr. Andrew Thaler, and Rick MacPherson will be the featured guests on this Sunday's "Your Humanities Half-Hour" radio program.

Villagomez, a Pew Charitable Trust officer, will provide a history of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, as well as efforts to develop a federal management plan and to have the monument declared a national marine sanctuary.

Thaler, of Blackbeard Biological and Open ROV, and MacPherson, of Pelagia Consulting, will discuss the scientific exploration of the monument from surface to abyss, including technologies used, new lifeforms discovered, and human impacts.

"Your Humanities Half-Hour," which airs each Sunday from 2pm to 2:30pm on Power 99, is hosted by Catherine Perry Harris. ***(PR)***

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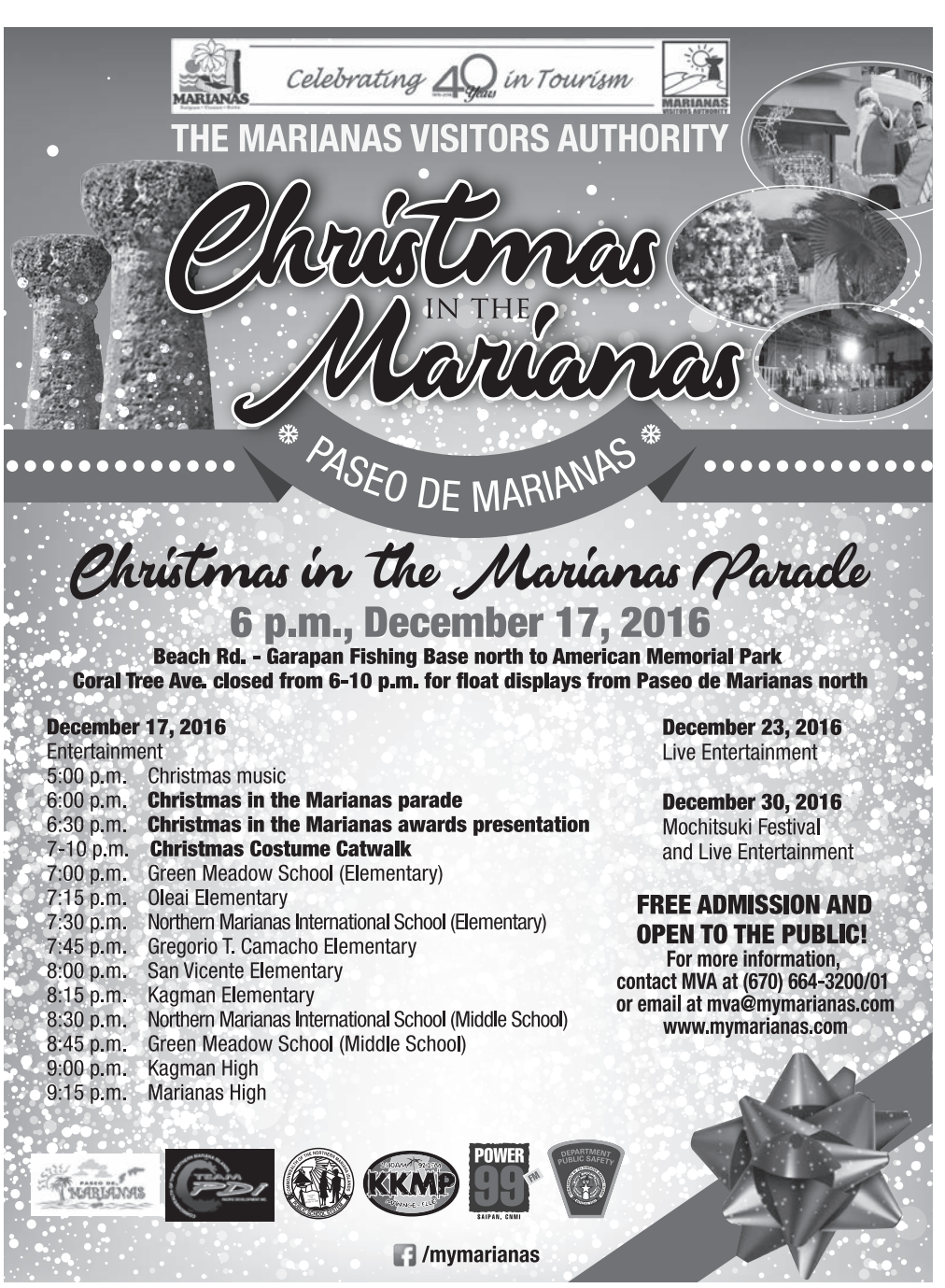
Celebrating 40 Years in Tourism
THE MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
Christmas IN THE Marianas
PASEO DE MARIANAS
Christmas in the Marianas Parade
6 p.m., December 17, 2016
Beach Rd. - Garapan Fishing Base north to American Memorial Park
Coral Tree Ave. closed from 6-10 p.m. for float displays from Paseo de Marianas north
December 17, 2016
Entertainment
5:00 p.m. Christmas music
6:00 p.m. Christmas in the Marianas parade
6:30 p.m. Christmas in the Marianas awards presentation
7-10 p.m. Christmas Costume Catwalk
7:00 p.m. Green Meadow School (Elementary)
7:15 p.m. Oleai Elementary
7:30 p.m. Northern Marianas International School (Elementary)
7:45 p.m. Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary
8:00 p.m. San Vicente Elementary
8:15 p.m. Kagman Elementary
8:30 p.m. Northern Marianas International School (Middle School)
8:45 p.m. Green Meadow School (Middle School)
9:00 p.m. Kagman High
9:15 p.m. Marianas High
December 23, 2016
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December 30, 2016
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Business

Yahoo says hackers stole information from over 1B accounts

NEW YORK (AP)—Yahoo says it believes hackers stole data from more than one billion user accounts in August 2013, in what is thought to be the largest data breach at an email provider.

The Sunnyvale, California, company was also home to what's now most likely the second largest hack in history, one that exposed 500 million Yahoo accounts . The company disclosed that breach in September. Yahoo said it hasn't identified the intrusion associated with this theft.

Yahoo says the information stolen may include names, email addresses, phone numbers, birthdates and security questions and answers. The company says it believes bank-account information and payment-card data were not affected.

But the company said hackers may have also stolen passwords from the affected accounts. Technically, those passwords should be secure; Yahoo said they were scrambled twice—once by encryption and once by another technique called hashing. But hackers have become adept at cracking secured passwords by assembling huge dictionaries of similarly scrambled phrases and matching them against stolen password databases.

That could mean trouble for any users who reused their Yahoo password for other online accounts.

QUESTIONS FOR VERIZON

The new hack revelation raises fresh questions about Verizon's $4.8 billion proposed acquisition of Yahoo, and whether the big mobile carrier will seek to modify or abandon its bid. If the hacks cause a user backlash against Yahoo, the company's services wouldn't be as valuable to Verizon. The telecom giant wants Yahoo and its many users to help it build a digital ad business.

In a statement, Verizon said that it will evaluate the situation as Yahoo investigates and will review the "new development before reaching any final conclusions." Spokesman Bob Varettoni declined to answer further questions.

Yahoo said Wednesday that it is requiring users to change their passwords and invalidating security questions so they can't be used to hack into accounts.

Federal prosecutors accuse execs of fixing drug prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal prosecutors have charged two former pharmaceutical executives with fixing prices of generic drugs, part of an ongoing government investigation into anticompetitive tactics by companies that make lower-cost drugs intended to reduce medication costs.

The Department of Justice accused two former Heritage Pharmaceuticals executives of conspiring to fix prices, rig bids and avoid competing with other drugmakers in marketing two generic drugs. The charges against Jeffrey Glazer, former CEO of Heritage, and Jason Malek, former president with the company, were unsealed Wednesday in Philadelphia.

Prosecutors allege that the executives worked to fix prices on an antibiotic and a diabetes medication between April 2013 and December 2015, according to the filing.

Malek and Glazer were charged via a criminal information, which is a charging document that is filed with the defendant's consent and typically signals an intent to plead guilty

Heritage said in a statement that it terminated the executives in August 2016 after conducting its own internal investigation.

"We are fully cooperating with all aspects of the Department of Justice's continuing investigation," a company spokesman said in an emailed statement.

The Eatontown, New Jersey-based company filed its own civil complaint against the executives last month alleging that "Glazer and Malek looted tens of millions of dollars from Heritage by misappropriating its business opportunities, fraudulently obtaining compensation for themselves and embezzling its intellectual property."

Japan moves to allow casino gambling at 'integrated resorts'

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's parliament approved Thursday a law on "integrated resorts" that is the first major hurdle in allowing casinos to set up shop in the wealthy nation.

Supporters of the casino legislation say it would enhance Japan's allure as a tourism destination and draw in wealthier travelers. Big players in the industry welcomed the news, with Wynn Resorts saying it was "extremely pleased" by its passage.

Opponents object to an expansion of legalized gambling, saying it will fuel organized crime and encourage gambling addiction. Surveys have shown a majority of Japanese oppose the plan.

Casinos are unlikely to start operating in Japan until 2021 or beyond, after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The new legislation would authorize the drafting of regulations for details such as the number and location of casinos, entry restrictions for Japanese and tax rates, which are expected to take up to a year to gain approval.

The approval of the final version of the legislation came in the wee hours Thursday, after a failed attempt by opposition lawmakers to pass a no-confidence motion against its top supporter, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Abe has sought passage of the long-delayed legislation for years, over the objections of many in his own ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama are among the cities said to be planning to seek casino licenses.

Casino operators view Japan as a lucrative "final frontier." In a report this month, analysts at investment bank CLSA estimated the potential market at $30 billion a year in gross revenue.

"This is a landmark occasion and should be a shot in the arm as it relates to investor sentiment in all gaming names that could be players in Japan," Grant Govertsen, a Macau-based analyst at investment firm Union Gaming, said in a commentary.

CLSA's forecast is based on revenues from Japan's existing forms of gambling, which include lotteries, pachinko—a kind of pinball machine—and wagering on horse, auto, bicycle and power boat racing, which combined rake in more than $30 billion.

COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Email: info@cnmicasinocommission.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library (Technology Room) in Susupe, Saipan.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. PRELIMINARIES:
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of Minutes – November 22, 2016
II. REPORTS:
A. Report by the Chairman
B. Report by the Executive Director
III. PUBLIC COMMENTS
IV. OLD BUSINESS:
A. Contract with Amerine Gaming Enterprises, Inc.: Procurement of Services
V. NEW BUSINESS:
A. Approval of Security & Surveillance Plans – Imperial Pacific Resort (Grand Mariana Resort)
B. Approval of Security & Surveillance Plans – Remote Test-Beds (San Antonio Village)
C. Proposed Amendment to the Casino Regulations:
1. §175-10.1-1305 (a)(b) & 1390 (a)(b): Increase Amount of Financial Threshold Requiring Licensure from $100,000 to $250,000
2. §175-10.1-1305 (e) & 1390 (c): Include Non-Profit Organization & Training Schools
3. §175-10.1-1830 (a): Include Written Notification of Known Violations
4. §175-10.1-2001 (e): Replace Licensee with CCC for Chip Manufacturer Revolving Fund
D. Approval of Regular Casino Key Employee ("CKE") Licenses:
1. Chan, Chi Pang ("Victor") – Director of Counts and Administration
2. Chao, Choi Teng ("Elaine") – Director of Loyalty Program
3. Leong, Wai Weng (Kevin) -- Assistant VP of Electronic Gaming
4. Lo, Hoi Leong (Vincent) – Assistant Director of Credit and Collection
5. Luong, Chi Huy ("Michael") – Vice President of Cage and Count
6. Ng, Ka Fung Gary ("Gary") – Manager of Gaming Solutions
7. Ng, Tze Wan ("Tze") – Director of Finance Administration
8. Saw, Chun Howe ("Howe") – Assistant VP of Electronic Gaming Technical
9. Tan, Jaik Hun ("Ronald") – Director of Electronic Gaming Technical
10. Teng, Sio I ("Marco") – Senior VP of Group Human Resources and Administration
11. Wong, Kam Yin ("Patrick") – Vice President of Development, Design, and Construction
12. Yu, Chi Fai ("Chester") – Assistant Director of Credit and Collection
13. Choi, Tat Mong ("Timothy") – Vice President of Cage
E. Notification of Provisional Casino Key Employee License Issued on 12/14/2016 to:
1. Wang, Shyun Han ("Vince") – Assistant Director of Surveillance Technical
F. Notification of Casino Provisional Vendor Licenses (Non-Gaming) Issued by CCC on 12/07/16:
1. Cabot Coach Builders, Inc.. (Retailer of Limousines and Shuttle Busses)
2. Coffman Engineering, Inc., (Consulting Engineering Services)
3. Delta Joint Creative Manufacture Co., LTD (Filing Cabinets and Gaming Accessories)
4. Moricco Equipment, LLC (Supply of Heavy Equipment, Trucks & Forkcliffs)
5. Pacific Changhong Corporation (Sale & Installation of airconditioning equipment)
VI. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS: Updates from IPI
A. Compliance with Title 31 - Anti-Money Laundering Requirements
B. Status of the Bond Offering
C. Workforce Plan: Personnel Training, Employment & Recruitment Efforts
D. Construction Progress Report – Grand Mariana Project/Imperial Pacific Resort
E. Test-Bed Facilities
F. Responsible Gaming – Problem Gambling
G. Other
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:
A. Report by the Legal Counsel
B. Financial Matters – Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC
C. CCC Personnel Matters –Employment Contract Renewal (Exe Director & Legal Counsel)
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day or more if necessary.

Juan M. Sablan
Chairman

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Telephone: (670) 664-4282
Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Operations Committee will hold its regular meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building to consider the following agenda. Public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA*

I. Preliminary Matters
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda

II. Public Comments**

III. Meeting with the Commonwealth Ports Authority Board of Directors

IV. Executive Session***
1. Consultation with the Legal Counsel on legal matters
2. Discuss Terms of CUC-CPA Settlement Agreement

V. Adjournment

* Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Agenda may be modified during the meeting.
** Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.
*** Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Committee members may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com
Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TERMINAL ROOF LEAK REPAIRS PROJECT NO. CPA-RA-003-13

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested firms to perform construction management (CM) services for roof leak repairs at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport Terminal, Project No. CPA-RA-003-13, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project is being funded by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. This project is in accordance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations and procedures shall be in full compliance with Section 40-50-202 Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Scope of Work (SOW) includes overall construction management services for the duration of the project. Details are available at CPA's Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package.

Questions regarding this request for qualification (RFQ) statements must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, Executive Assistant, in writing via hand delivery to the CPA Administration Office, via fax to (670) 664-3533 and/or emailed to wprater@cpa.gov.mp by no later than Friday, January 6, 2017, 4:30 p.m., local time.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Overall CM experience in the Pacific area and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands – 30 points;
2. CM experience related to airport projects; – 30 points;
3. Level of proficiency in performing CM services promptly; and level of experience with the local and federal regulations and requirements; – 15 points;
4. The general reputation of the firm in terms of quality of CM work experience, firm's ability to perform the services and the firm's professional integrity and competence – 15 points; and
5. Resumes of key personnel including current licenses and registrations of principal, if applicable – 10 points.

Interested Consultants shall submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf on a compact disc of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **4:30 p.m., FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2017.** Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

Discussions may be conducted with at least three (3) of the firms regarding the agreement requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three (3) firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required.

An agreement shall be negotiated with the highest qualified construction management firm or company at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government. If a fair and reasonable price cannot be negotiated with the highest ranking qualified firm, then additional firms may be selected in order of competence and qualifications and negotiations continued until a fair and reasonable price is agreed upon.

All responses to this RFQ shall take into account any and all travel costs and taxes that will be charged to the consultant awarded an agreement for this project, including excise tax.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

For the Commonwealth Ports Authority

/s/ **CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO**
Acting Executive Director

Date: December 12, 2016

Nation

Judge rejects Washington electors' attempt to avoid fine

SEATTLE (AP)—A longshot bid to deny Donald Trump the presidency suffered another setback Wednesday after a federal judge rejected an effort by two Democratic electors from Washington state to avoid being fined if they ignore the results of the state's popular vote.

U.S. District Judge James L. Robart said electors Bret Chiafalo and Levi Guerra had presented a case far too speculative to warrant blocking state law. The pair have said they're not sure how they'll vote, and there's nothing to indicate whether Washington would actually fine them.

Both signed pledges to vote for their party's nominee—Hillary Clinton—if she won Washington, which she did.

But they have said they might join with other so-called "Hamilton electors" from both parties to choose some other candidate when the Electoral College meets next Monday because they believe Trump is unfit for office.

AP

Democratic presidential elector Bret Chiafalo speaks outside the U.S. Courthouse before a hearing, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016, in Seattle.

Washington law states that electors who break their pledge can be fined up to $1,000. A lawyer for the pair, Sumeer Singla, asked U.S. District Judge James L. Robart to issue an injunction that would preclude the state from fining them.

He argued that compelling the electors to vote a certain way is a violation of their free-speech rights. Citing the writings of one of the nation's founding fathers, Alexander Hamilton, he said one role of the Electoral College is to ensure an unfit person doesn't assume the presidency.

A federal judge in Colorado rejected similar arguments Monday, calling a bid there "a political stunt," and a Denver judge on Tuesday held that Colorado's nine electors must vote for Clinton because she won the state's popular vote.

Another case has been filed in California. Trump won 306 electors last month, well over the 270 needed to put him in the White House. About half the states have laws binding their electors to the winner of the popular vote.

Robart noted that no court has held that an elector's vote in the Electoral College is an exercise in free speech, and even if it were, the plaintiffs appeared to have voluntarily given it up by signing the pledge.

Conservatives seek ally in Trump in Western land disputes

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Conservatives who have long complained about the government's control of vast Western lands hope they will have a new ally in Donald Trump, who has sent mixed signals about how he might manage land and whether he would relinquish federal authority over millions of acres.

The president-elect has pledged to honor Theodore Roosevelt's tradition of conservation in the West, with its expansive deserts, snow-capped mountain ranges and red rock canyons. But he has also said he will "unleash" energy production there and has railed against "faceless, nameless bureaucrats" in land-management agencies.

Dozens of demands for land handovers have surfaced in Western state legislatures in recent years, and more are sure to be offered in Congress during the Trump administration.

"Those who are championing these issues certainly see this as a rare opportunity," said Karla Jones, director of a task force for the American Legislative Exchange Council, a Washington-based organization that develops bills for conservative lawmakers.

On Tuesday, Trump offered the post of interior secretary, the nation's top custodian of public lands, to Republican Rep. Ryan Zinke of Montana, who has not said whether he will accept. The retired Navy SEAL insists that he does not favor relinquishing federal control of the land, as Democrats allege.

Twelve Western states contain more than half of the nation's 640 million acres of federal public lands. Those lands comprise more than 60 percent of Alaska, Idaho and Utah.

Resentment of government control has simmered across the West for decades, occasionally boiling over into showdowns such as the armed takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge headquarters in Oregon last winter.

Newtown marks 4th anniversary of Sandy Hook school shooting

NEWTOWN, Conn. (AP)—Newtown held a moment of silence Wednesday and flags were flying at half-staff across Connecticut to mark the fourth anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting.

It was Dec. 14, 2012, when 20 children and six educators were killed by a troubled 20-year-old gunman who shot his way into the Connecticut schoolhouse. Adam Lanza fatally shot his mother before driving to the school, and then killed himself after the rampage.

President Barack Obama said in a Facebook post that the anniversary was a day to remember staff and teachers who guided children to safety, the first responders and the victims.

"And we remember the children who held each other in the face of unconscionable evil; who, even as they've grown up in the shadow of this tragedy, will grow up loved and cared for more fiercely than ever," Obama wrote.

Newtown typically does not hold an official memorial event on the anniversary, but prayer services were offered Wednesday and a counseling center was open for extended hours. The governor ordered flags to fly at half-staff in remembrance of the victims.

First Selectman Pat Llodra asked town employees to refrain from doing any work, including answering phones, between 9:30 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. to mark the time when the shootings took place. In Newtown's schools, it was a regular day of classes, although School Superintendent Joseph Erardi said there would be quiet reflections and age-appropriate messages for students.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
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NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, December 21, 2016, at 9:30 a.m. in the CPA Conference Room, located in Captain George Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan on Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (October 18, 2016)

II. PUBLIC COMMENT
III. CORRESPONDENCES
IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS
1. Financial Affairs Committee
2. Airport Facilities Committee
3. Seaport Facilities Committee
4. Personnel Affairs Committee

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
VI. OLD BUSINESS
1. None

VII. NEW BUSINESS
1. Personnel Matters:
   a. Appointments
   b. Position Descriptions
   c. Reclassifications
2. Supplemental Budget Request - Airport
3. Amendment to Board Bylaws
4. International Ground Services, Inc.
   a. Ground Handling
   b. Lease
5. Pacific Aviation Services
6. Tandem Skydive Saipan, Inc.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
IX. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS
X. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

THOMAS P. VILLAGOMEZ
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors
December 15, 2016

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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PUBLIC AUCTION NOTICE
SURPLUS VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (Authority) will sell at Public Auction, **December 23, 2016 at 1:00 PM** surplus vehicles and equipment at the Tinian Harbor, Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Each vehicle or equipment will have a reasonable minimum bid cost. Bidders are requested to inspect the vehicles and equipment by contacting the Tinian Airport Manager at telephone number 433-9301, Monday to Friday, 08:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The vehicles and equipment will be sold "As Is" and "Where Is" and without Warranty. The successful bidder is required to pay 50% down payment on acceptance of bid. Balance shall be payable at the Tinian Airport Manager's Office, Tinian International Airport within 5 calendar days from auction closing date. Bidder shall only remove the vehicles or equipment from the Authority premises upon full payment of bid price. Failure to pay will result in the forfeiture of the down payment and equipment. Payment shall be in cash, cashier's check, or money order payable to CPA.

Inquiries may be directed to the Procurement Officer, Mr. Alex C. Tudela at telephone number 237-6563.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Christopher S. Tenorio
Acting Executive Director

Dated this 7th day of December, 2016

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-003-17

INVITATION FOR BIDS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting sealed bids for **Solid Waste Collection Services** for the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The **bid package** containing all the specifications, date of pre-bid meeting, and other requirements will be available at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, 2nd Floor of the Arrival Building beginning **December 16, 2016** upon payment of **$100.00** to be made at CPA Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport. All responses to this IFB shall take into account any costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Bidders shall also take into consideration all necessary badging requirements and fees for this project.

Bids will be received at the office of the Executive Director, mentioned above until **2:00 PM LOCAL TIME, Friday, January 13, 2017**. Bids are to be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked: "Bid for Solid Waste Collection Services at the Saipan International Airport, Project No. CPA-IFB-003-17". Bidders are to submit one (1) original and three (3) copies.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Invitation For Bids; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Acting Executive Director

Date: December 16, 2016

California tells Uber to stop rides in self-driving cars

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Hours after Uber began offering people in San Francisco rides in self-driving cars Wednesday, California regulators told the ride-hailing company to stop and said it could face legal action if it does not get a state permit.

Uber started a public pilot program in the morning, and by midafternoon, the California Department of Motor Vehicles sent the company a letter saying the service was illegal until it got a permit required for putting autonomous vehicles on public roads.

Uber knew about the requirement but argued that its cars do not meet the state's definition of an "autonomous vehicle" because it requires a person behind the wheel to monitor and intervene if needed.

Making the distinction on the definition of an autonomous vehicle is in line with Uber's history of testing legal boundaries. Although the company has been around less than a decade, it has argued with authorities in California and around the world about how much of its drivers' histories should be covered in background checks and whether those drivers should be treated as contractors ineligible for employee benefits.

"If Uber does not confirm immediately that it will stop its launch and seek a testing permit, DMV will initiate legal action," DMV Chief Counsel Brian Soublet wrote.

He did not specify what that might entail but referenced the possibility of taking Uber to court.

Uber did not immediately respond to a request for comment, so it was unclear if it stopped the service.

Its hometown launch earlier in the day expanded a deployment of self-driving cars it started in Pittsburgh in September. The testing lets everyday people experience the cars as Uber works to identify glitches before expanding the technology's use in San Francisco and elsewhere.

It deployed a "handful" of Volvo luxury SUVs—the company wouldn't release an exact number—that have been tricked out with sensors so they can steer, accelerate and brake, and even decide to change lanes.

The cars have an Uber employee behind the wheel to take over should the technology fail. Users of the app may be matched with a self-driving car but can opt out if they prefer a human driver. Self-driven rides cost the same as ordinary ones.

PERMIT ME NOT

California's DMV has issued permits to 20 companies for tests of autonomous vehicles on public roads, mostly traditional automakers and tech companies.

Getting a permit for prototype testing is part of legal language negotiated between the state and industry, and DMV lawyer Soublet argued in an interview that the process helps maintain public confidence that the technology is safe.

"Don't start doing this stuff. Apply for the permit. Follow the rules," Soublet said of Uber.

The company argues that its cars aren't covered by the permit requirement, which says an "autonomous vehicle" requires a permit if it can drive itself "without the active physical control or monitoring of a natural person."

According to Anthony Levandowski, the leader of Uber's self-driving program, Uber's cars simply aren't advanced enough to drive themselves without human monitoring.

"We're just not capable of doing that yet," he said. Therefore, the Volvos are not autonomous and do not require a permit, he said.

It makes no sense to follow rules that do not apply, Levandowski said: "This is where science and logic needs to trump blind compliance."

Former SEAL Zinke tapped to lead Interior Department

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)—Rep. Ryan Zinke of Montana made no secret of his ambitions to join a Donald Trump Cabinet, and yet his nomination as interior secretary is in some ways an unlikely fit for the retired U.S. Navy SEAL.

Zinke, 55, was an early supporter of the president-elect and publicly expressed his interest in a Cabinet post when Trump visited Montana in May.

Like other Western states, Montana's wide-open, rugged landscape has a huge federal presence. The Interior Department and other U.S. agencies control almost a third of its land and even more of the underground "mineral estate" that holds vast amounts of coal, oil and natural gas.

As with several other Trump Cabinet nominees, Zinke has advocated for increased energy drilling and mining on those lands and expressed skepticism about the urgency of climate change.

The Republican lawmaker, who describes himself as a "Teddy Roosevelt Republican," also has been a vocal supporter of keeping public lands in the government's hands. That's a central political issue in Montana, where hunting and fishing access is considered sacrosanct.

Zinke

The president-elect's son Donald Jr. is an avid hunter and was in Montana on a hunting trip last month, during which Sen. Steve Daines recommended Zinke for Interior. That and Zinke's stance on public lands may have given him an advantage over another lawmaker Trump was said to have considered for the post, Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash. She wrote on Facebook Tuesday that it had been an "honor" to be invited to meet with Trump.

Zinke was offered the job after meeting Monday with Trump in New York, according to two people with knowledge of the matter. A person close to Zinke confirmed the offer. All three spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the transition process publicly.

Zinke had not yet announced Wednesday whether he would accept.

Energy development, land management and hunting fall under the Interior Department's jurisdiction. However, those were second-tier issues for Zinke during his successful re-election campaign this fall against Democrat Denise Juneau.

In interviews with The Associated Press during that campaign, Zinke repeatedly identified his top priorities as national security, more thorough vetting of refugees to screen out terrorists, the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and improving the U.S. economy.

ACROSS THE NATION

Colorado school district to allow teachers to arm themselves

DENVER (AP)—A rural Colorado school district decided Wednesday night to allow its teachers and other school staff to carry guns on campus to protect students. The Hanover School District 28 board voted 3-2 to allow school employees to volunteer to be armed on the job after undergoing training. The district's two schools serve about 270 students about 30 miles southeast of Colorado Springs, and it takes law enforcement an average of 20 minutes to get there. The district currently shares an armed school resource officer with four other school districts. Board member Michael Lawson backed the idea not only as way to protect students from a mass shooting, but also as protection against possible violence connected with nearby marijuana grows, which he believes are connected with foreign cartels, the Gazette of Colorado Springs reported (http://bit.ly/2hoSxeQ).

Winter storm snarls traffic in Oregon, stranding thousands

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—A rare snow storm brought Oregon's largest city to a halt on Wednesday, with thousands of vehicles barely able to move on Portland streets and on one of its main highways. Commuters began leaving work early, hoping to beat the storm, but they quickly found themselves on streets that were clogged with traffic that was inching along on snow-slick streets. Cars fish-tailed, spun out, and collided. Motorists, some with their kids in their cars, who had made scant progress tried to keep their patience. After more than three hours of waiting, some abandoned their vehicles and started walking. Others hoped they wouldn't run out of gas. Kimberly Wrolstad had been stuck on Interstate 5 heading to Tigard for about 90 minutes Wednesday afternoon.

73-year-old killed by police had crucifix but no gun

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A 73-year-old man with dementia fatally shot by police had a crucifix—not a gun, as officers were led to believe, Bakersfield police said Wednesday. A coroner found the plastic crucifix on Francisco Serna well after an officer fatally shot him near his home just after midnight Monday, Sgt. Gary Carruesco said. It's unclear if a 911 caller who had reported a man with a gun may have mistaken the crucifix for a weapon, as Serna's family speculated. Officer Reagan Selman fired at Serna seven times after the grandfather refused repeated commands to take his hand out of his pocket and stop walking toward police, incoming Bakersfield police Chief Lyle Martin said Tuesday. In addition to the 911 caller, Martin said two people who had encountered Serna hours before the shooting thought he was armed. Serna's family is calling his death murder. They say they want an independent investigation into the shooting and for the U.S. Justice Department to look into whether police violated Serna's civil rights.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
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NMHC EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

This is to inform all Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)-approved Contractors (including Tinian and Rota contractors) that we are currently updating our Approved Contractor Listing for calendar year 2017. In order for NMHC to extend your company's inclusion on our listing for another year, you must submit the documentations listed below. Those companies that are not on our list of approved contractors but wish to be included are likewise encouraged to submit the following:

1. Valid CNMI Business License
2. Current Financial Statements (certified by the principle executive officer and principle financial officer)
3. 2 Years Business Gross Revenue (BGR) Tax Returns
4. 2 Years Corporate Income Tax Returns (1120)
5. Clearance Letter from the Department of Labor
6. Certificate of Compliance from the Revenue & Taxation Office
7. Workmen's Compensation Policy
8. Name of Insurance Company(ies) Currently Dealing With
9. A list of on-going/completed projects showing name of project, start and completion dates, and contract amounts
10. At least three (3) reference letters from owners of the completed projects
11. List of vendors and suppliers and at least three reference letters from them (CONSTRUCTION QUARRY, READY-MIX CEMENT & HARDWARE STORES)
12. Company background
13. Articles of Incorporation & Company By-Laws, if applicable
14. Annual Report (Registrar of Corporations)

FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS BY DECEMBER 31, 2016 WILL RESULT IN YOUR COMPANY'S ELIMINATION FROM OUR LIST OF "APPROVED CONTRACTORS".

NMHC encourages Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MBE/WBE) to participate in this Request for Qualifications and that they will be afforded full opportunity to participate and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, or disability status.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

/S/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
CORPORATE DIRECTOR

Asia

PH official says president exaggerating on killings

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine justice secretary said Wednesday that President Rodrigo Duterte often exaggerates killings of criminals he supposedly carried out to send a chilling warning to lawbreakers.

Vitaliano Aguirre II told reporters that Duterte may have been resorting to hyperbole when he suggested in a recent speech that he used to go around his southern Davao city as mayor on a big motorcycle to look for criminals to kill so policemen would emulate him.

"The president always resorts to hyperbole, he always exaggerates just to put his message across," Aguirre told reporters.

Duterte said in a speech to business executives at the presidential palace Monday that he used to hunt down criminals himself to set an example.

"In Davao, I used to do it personally. Just to show to the guys that, if I can do it why can't you?" he said. "I go around in Davao with a motorcycle, with a big bike around and I would just patrol the streets and looking for trouble also. I was really looking for an encounter to be able to kill."

Duterte, however, has repeatedly said that drug suspects were only killed under his anti-drug crackdown as mayor, and now as president, when they fought back and threatened law enforcers.

AP

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte arrives for a meeting with Cambodia Prime Minister Hun Sen at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016.

Still, Amnesty International said such remarks by Duterte incite policemen and civilians to violence and encourage them to commit extrajudicial killings.

"By boasting about the blood on his own hands, President Duterte will further embolden police and vigilantes to blatantly violate laws and carry out more extrajudicial executions without fear of being held to account," Rafendi Djamin, the human rights group's director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, said in a statement.

"President Duterte should be fulfilling his obligations by ordering investigations into these killings and bringing those responsible to justice, not claiming a part in them," Djamin said. "Statements like these continue to give everybody, including the police in the Philippines a license to kill in the knowledge that they are protected by the president."

Duterte, who took office in June, has been widely criticized for his brutal crackdown on illegal drugs, which has led to the deaths of more than 2,000 suspects in gunbattles with police. About 3,000 other drug-related killings are being investigated by authorities to determine if these were related to the illegal drug trade.

Report: Beijing adds weapons to South China Sea islands

BEIJING (AP)—A U.S. think tank says recent satellite images appear to show that China has installed anti-aircraft and anti-missile weapons on its man-made islands in the South China Sea.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies said in a report late Wednesday that the anti-aircraft guns and close-in weapons systems designed to guard against missile attack have been placed on all seven of China's newly created islands.

The outposts were built in recent years by piling sand on top of coral reefs followed by the construction of airstrips, barracks, lighthouses and radar stations and other infrastructure.

China says the islands are intended to boost maritime safety in the region. They also mark its claim to ownership of practically the entire South China Sea, its islands, reefs and other maritime features.

Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei also claim territory in the strategic waterway, while the U.S. Navy insists on its right to operate throughout the area, including in waters close to China's new outposts.

The U.S. has committed to beefing up its military presence in the area, although new uncertainty has been introduced by incoming U.S. president Donald Trump.

The president-elect has called for a reconsideration of its commitments to its Asian allies, including Japan and South Korea, while simultaneously criticizing Chinese trade policy toward the U.S. and its new territorial assertiveness.

Trump referred to China's man-made islands in a tweet earlier this month, saying Beijing didn't ask the U.S. if it was OK to "build a massive military complex in the South China Sea."

Russian leader Putin, due for talks in Japan, is late again

NAGATO, Japan (AP)—Vladimir Putin is living up to a reputation for being late.

The Russian president was due in Japan on Thursday afternoon for talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at a hot springs resort in western Japan.

Japanese officials say Putin's flight has departed but is behind schedule. Japanese media reported that he would arrive about three hours late in the evening.

The cause of the delay was not known.

It will be Putin's first official visit to a G-7 country since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014. Abe hopes to make progress on a long-running territorial dispute between the countries.

Putin has shown up late for meetings before. He kept Pope Francis waiting at the Vatican for one hour and 20 minutes in 2015. Putin reportedly kept then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych waiting for four hours in 2012 due to an unscheduled stop on the way to talk to bikers. Earlier this month, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida waited for two hours when he visited the Kremlin ahead of Putin's visit this week.

During the talks Thursday and Friday, Abe hopes to make progress on the 70-year-old territorial dispute while trying to bolster ties with economic projects, though a breakthrough is seen as difficult.

Disagreements over four southern Kuril islands, which Japan calls the Northern Territories, kept the countries from signing a peace treaty formally ending World War II hostilities.

Putin told Japanese journalists earlier this week that progress on the island issue hinges on Japan's flexibility to compromise.

After holding talks on territorial issues at the hot springs, Abe and Putin then head to Tokyo on Friday to shift gear to economic issues.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Arrested Indonesian woman says IS militant ordered bombing

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A female would-be suicide bomber arrested last week one day before her planned attack in Indonesia's capital said she took orders from Bahrun Naim, an Indonesian with the Islamic State group in Syria accused of orchestrating several attacks in the past year. Dian Yulia Novi and her husband Nur Solihin were among four suspected militants arrested Saturday after police detected their plot to bomb a guard-changing ceremony at the presidential palace. A neighborhood on the outskirts of Jakarta was evacuated after a bomb was found. Police suspect the four were part of a militant network responsible for a bomb-making lab in West Java province that was operating under the direction of Naim.

Mourners attend mass funeral of Pakistan plane crash victims

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Officials say hundreds of mourners are attending a mass funeral for more than a dozen victims of last week's plane crash at a hospital in Islamabad after DNA tests confirmed their identities. Cabinet minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said doctors handed over the bodies of 13 victims to their relatives on Wednesday. Earlier, TV footage showed a Pakistani Air Force plane transporting the remains of Junaid Jamshed, a popular pop singer-turned-Islamic preacher who was among those killed in the crash, to the port city of Karachi. Jamshed sang a motivational song dedicated to the air force last year. He was among 47 people who were killed when the PIA plane went down while traveling from Chitral to Islamabad. The remains of nearly half of the passengers are yet to be identified.

Rebels kill 2 Indian policemen near border with Myanmar

GAUHATI, India (AP)—Heavily armed rebels on Thursday killed two Indian police officers in an ambush on a highway they were guarding hours before the visit of the top elected official of an insurgency-wracked northeastern state, police said. Another five officers were wounded in the attack in Lokchao area in Manipur state close to India's border with Myanmar, according to the police control room. Manipur state Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh postponed his visit to the region following the attack. Last month, Singh escaped unhurt after shots were fired at him and his entourage as he was getting out of his helicopter at the Ukhrul helipad in a nearby district. The militants opened fire on the police patrol with assault rifles, killing one officer on the spot. Another officer died in a hospital, police said. An exchange of gunfire lasted several hours in the region, 70 kilometers (45 miles) south of the state capital Manipur.

World

Aleppo cease-fire unravels, raising specter of bloody end

BEIRUT (AP)—A cease-fire to evacuate rebel fighters and civilians from the remaining opposition-held neighborhoods of Aleppo unraveled on Wednesday, once again raising the specter of a bloody end to the battle for Syria's largest city as residents reported the resumption of shelling and brutal bombing runs.

Opponents of President Bashar Assad accused the government and its allies of scuttling the deal by adding new conditions, including the lifting of a rebel siege on two pro-government Shiite villages in nearby Idlib province.

However, hours after it crumbled, the rebels said the deal was back on. There was no comment from the government or its allies, and minutes after the new cease-fire was to take effect at 11:30 p.m. local time, there were still reports of shelling in the few blocks of the city under rebel control.

Three rebel spokesmen said the first group of wounded people and civilians were to be escorted out of the city early Thursday morning. Rebels would follow, they said, adding that the conditions had not changed and that they had even agreed with the Russians on the exact number of buses and convoys to be deployed in the rescue.

A man kneels at candles reading Aleppo during a gathering in a show of support for Aleppo citizens, in Paris, Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016. AP

The Syrian military media denied an agreement had been reached and said in a statement that the negotiations were "complicated."

The evacuation was to have begun at dawn Wednesday, but quickly derailed, descending into terrifying violence. Residents said government buses arrived in the pre-dawn hours at agreed upon meeting points, where the wounded were first in line to be evacuated after surviving weeks of intense fighting amid destroyed medical facilities and depleted supplies.

But they were turned away by pro-government militias manning the checkpoints. Then violence erupted: shelling and then airstrikes. The rebels retaliated, at one point shelling the pro-government villages of Foua and Kfraya in Idlib and detonating a car bomb in a frontline area.

Residents, activists and medical staff described mayhem in the tiny sliver of Aleppo still under opposition control as volleys of shells rained down on the area where tens of thousands of civilians were trapped alongside rebels in gutted apartment buildings and other shelters.

Videos shared online by residents huddling indoors recorded the sounds of war—deafening explosions that highlighted fears of a bloodbath. Rescuers were overwhelmed and a comprehensive casualty toll was impossible.

"They began to strike as if there's no such thing as a cease-fire or civilian evacuation," said Mahmoud Raslan, a local media activist.

Mohammed Abu Jaafar, head of forensics in eastern Aleppo, said residents felt "duped."

"People have left their shelters .... to be ready for the evacuation. I can't describe it," Abu Jaafar said. "Since the morning, they started to target the areas where people have gathered. ... These people were walking to the crossings designated for exit."

The initial evacuation deal was mediated late Tuesday by Turkey and Russia as the rebel enclave rapidly dissolved, ceding more and more territory in the face of the brutal advance by Syrian forces, backed by Russia and Shiite militias from Lebanon, Iraq and Afghanistan. Along with Russia, Iran backs Assad's government and has committed advisers and elite Revolutionary Guard forces to the government side. Turkey backs some of the rebel groups fighting to topple Assad.

River crossing draws migrants

DIDYMOTEICHO, Greece (AP)—This time of year, the Evros river runs broad and icy, its banks muddy and remote. It's a formidable sight for migrants reaching Turkey's land border with Greece, but not formidable enough to stop people who have already come so far in their bid to make it to a new life in Europe.

"It was horribly cold," said Kevin Mohamadi, 37, an Iranian who said he crossed the river after paying smugglers. "We were a group of 16, including Afghan families with four children each, and crossed in two boatloads. Then we had to walk through forests for four hours, to avoid being caught."

A year after the uncontrolled influx of more than 1 million refugees and economic migrants to debt-hobbled Greece, this border region is again seeing rising flows of migrants. It's largely due to a legal loophole: restrictions imposed in March to curb new arrivals by sea in the Greek islands don't apply to the land border.

That means that anyone entering here is far ahead of island arrivals in the queue for refugee relocation to other European countries, and those who do not qualify for asylum could even be spared deportation that they would otherwise face under the deal between the European Union and Turkey.

Also, despite the river crossing, the discomfort and danger pales when compared with the sea journey to the islands.

"The refugees usually cross in boats," said Panagiotis Ageladarakis, mayor of the border village of Amorio, about 1.5 kilometers (just under a mile) from the river. "At its widest the river is about 150 meters across, but there are narrower points, and Turks ferry them over. ... Then they walk to our villages. It's a regular sight."

Figures on arrivals here are far from complete. The only statistics released are of people who are caught with the smugglers they pay to ferry them over the Evros, which runs along most of the 180-kilometer (110-mile) border. There is no information on migrants who make it across without the help of smugglers, nor for those who are smuggled successfully across and taken further into Greece or elsewhere in Europe.

But even the few numbers that do exist show a rapid upward trend. About 655 people—largely Syrians—were arrested with 33 smugglers in October, double the figure for September.

A police official also told The Associated Press that Greek authorities are deterring about 4,000 people a month from coming over by driving patrol cars to the Greek side of the river when they see a group of migrants about to cross, or calling Turkish officials to pick them up. That's nearly three times the number seen in an average summer month, even though the crossing is much easier then because low water levels make it possible to wade across the river.

Migrants seeking to be included in EU plans to relocate them to other European Union countries often immediately hand themselves over to police and start their asylum application process. Ageladarakis said they usually arrive early in the mornings.

"They come here to the coffee shop and ask us to call the police," he said.

S. Sudan on 'brink of ethnic civil war'

BERLIN (AP)—South Sudan is "on the brink of an all-out ethnic civil war which could destabilize the entire region," the head of a team of U.N. investigators told the U.N. Human Rights Council on Wednesday, describing a shattered country where children as young as 2 have been raped.

Yasmin Sooka addressed the council at a meeting in Geneva requested by the United States as alarm grows about the rise of hate speech by South Sudanese officials and others as civil war grinds on.

Tens of thousands have been killed in fighting in South Sudan, and more than a million people have fled the East African country. Sooka said thousands of women have been raped.

The recent visit by the U.N. team of investigators found indications that "a steady process of ethnic cleansing is already underway in some parts of the country," Sooka said. She said fighting is expected to "begin in earnest" now that the dry season has arrived in South Sudan.

The Human Rights Council approved without a vote a resolution expressing concern at "ethnically motivated incitement to hatred and violence by all sides," condemning sexual violence and calling on all involved to end rights abuses.

South Sudan's representative said the council meeting to discuss his country wasn't necessary.

Also Wednesday, South Sudan President Salva Kiir in a speech to parliament called for a national dialogue that would attempt to redefine the country's national identity. Kiir again called for a cease-fire in the civil war but offered few details on how it would work with multiple opposition groups across the country.

Ancient Nimrud site is wrecked

NIMRUD, Iraq (AP)—Islamic State extremists have destroyed the ancient site of Nimrud almost beyond recognition, and left its ruins vulnerable to thieves and further damage, according to the United Nations.

Wednesday marked the first visit to a cultural heritage site seized back from the Islamic State group for UNESCO, the world body's cultural organization, and perhaps a sign of what lies ahead in Iraq and Syria. Nimrud was seized in summer 2014 by IS, and the group made a point of filming the destruction of its Northwest Palace.

As the assault on Mosul drew closer this fall, the group also bulldozed the ziggurat, a 140-foot tall structure that dominated the site. That destruction has not yet emerged on IS propaganda.

Associated Press journalists joined the UNESCO team and an Iraqi archaeologist who served as their guide, Layla Salih.

"The most important thing right now is to ensure some basic protection, in particular of this palace, because of all the pieces that remain. And they are completely unprotected," said Louise Haxthausen, the UNESCO representative to Iraq.

Salih estimated that around 60 percent of the site was a total loss, but was encouraged by the giant piles of rubble because, she said, that means some of the antiquities could be relatively safe beneath the dirt and bricks—as opposed to looted.

Nimrud was captured from IS in early November. But Islamic State fighters this week recaptured the Syrian historical site of Palmyra.

Science & Technology

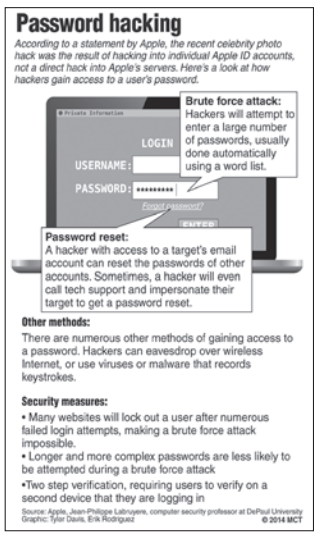
Yahoo hack serves as reminder to change passwords

NEW YORK (AP)—Yahoo has been hacked—again.

News that the struggling internet company was breached back in 2013, and the personal information of more than one billion of its users was stolen, should serve as a reminder that everyone's email and personal information is vulnerable to hacking.

Safeguards you can take include creating strong passwords and changing them when you have to. Yes, all this is a pain, and it's not your fault that the tech industry hasn't been able to stem the rise in security breaches. But if you do nothing, you could be putting your personal or financial information—or even your identity—at risk.

In this Tuesday, July 19, 2016 file photo, a cyclist rides past a Yahoo sign at the company's headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif. AP


Password hacking
According to a statement by Apple, the recent celebrity photo hack was the result of hacking into individual Apple ID accounts, not a direct hack into Apple's servers. Here's a look at how hackers gain access to a user's password.
Private Information
LOGIN
USERNAME:
PASSWORD:
Forgot password?
ENTER
Brute force attack:
Hackers will attempt to enter a large number of passwords, usually done automatically using a word list.
Password reset:
A hacker with access to a target's email account can reset the passwords of other accounts. Sometimes, a hacker will even call tech support and impersonate their target to get a password reset.
Other methods:
There are numerous other methods of gaining access to a password. Hackers can eavesdrop over wireless Internet, or use viruses or malware that records keystrokes.
Security measures:
• Many websites will lock out a user after numerous failed login attempts, making a brute force attack impossible.
• Longer and more complex passwords are less likely to be attempted during a brute force attack
•Two step verification, requiring users to verify on a second device that they are logging in
Source: Apple, Jean-Philippe Labruyere, computer security professor at DePaul University
Graphic: Tyler Davis, Erik Rodriguez
© 2014 MCT

WHAT'S A GOOD PASSWORD?

The more complicated and lengthy a password is, the harder it will be for hackers to guess.

Don't include your kids' names, birthdays or references to any other personal details. Hackers routinely troll Facebook and Twitter for clues to passwords like these. Obvious and default passwords such as "Password123" are also bad, as are words commonly found in dictionaries, as these are used in programs hackers have to automate guesses.

Long and random combinations of letters, numbers and other characters work best.

Your password reset questions should be as unique as possible too, and don't be tempted to recycle those either. This was some of the information stolen in the Yahoo hack. And with the help of social media, it's not hard for hackers to find those little personal tidbits like what your mother's maiden name is, or the name of your hometown.

IS IT OK TO REUSE PASSWORDS?

No. Avoid using the same password for multiple sites, so that a break of your school's PTA site wouldn't lead hackers to your online banking account.

You can make things easier on yourself by using a password-manager service such as LastPass or DashLane. They remember complex passwords for you—but you have to trust them. Last year, LastPass disclosed "suspicious activity" and told users to change their master passwords.

Some web browsers such as Apple's Safari and Google's Chrome also have built-in password managers. They work if you switch devices but not if you switch browsers.

SHOULD I CHANGE MY PASSWORD?

While some security experts argue that it's more important to pick a complicated password than to change them frequently, if you haven't changed your Yahoo password since 2013 do it now.

And even if you have changed your Yahoo password in the last three years, you might want to do it anyway. Breaches are often worse than they first appear. LinkedIn disclosed earlier this year that a 2012 breach affected 117 million accounts- not the 6.5 million previously thought.

WHAT MORE CAN I DO?

Multi-factor identification—which asks users to enter a second form of identification, such as a code texted to their phone—will provide additional protections. It's now commonplace for many email and social media accounts.

Even if hackers manage to get your password they still need your phone with the texted code.

SHOULD SOME ACCOUNTS BE TRASHED?

Delete or deactivate accounts you no longer use. Has your Yahoo email account been filled with spam since before the invention of smartphones? Maybe it's time to say goodbye.

That goes for social media too, (remember Myspace?). This often can be done through your account settings—as long as you still have your password to sign in.

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA SECURITY?

And while we're on the subject of social media, make sure you restrict posts to just your actual friends. You can adjust that in the settings.

Some companies try to help their users with this. Facebook, for example, occasionally prompts its users to review who can see their personal information and how strong their security settings are.

Nonetheless, assume that everyone everywhere can see what you're posting. That'll keep hackers from harvesting those juicy details they can use to crack into your accounts.

TECH Q&A Here is what to try when if your Wi-Fi signal fails often

By STEVE ALEXANDER
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

Q: You recently wrote about the periodic loss of a home Wi-Fi signal (see tinyurl.com/zl62sq2), but it was specific to a user of AT&T's internet service. As a Comcast customer, what can I do about the frequent loss of a Wi-Fi signal?

A: Losing a Wi-Fi signal is common. Here are a few solutions:

Weak signal: Check the list of available networks to see how strong (number of bars) your Wi-Fi signal is. If it's low, the computer and Wi-Fi access point (in your case, the cable modem) may be too far apart, or may have too many walls between them. Move the two closer together.

Alternatively, you can buy an antenna-equipped $30 to $50 Wi-Fi adapter (receiver) that plugs into a USB port and can pull in a weaker signal (see tinyurl.com/zk7my7s).

Or you can buy a $40-and-up Wi-Fi range extender (see tinyurl.com/kuwkq3j) that will rebroadcast your existing Wi-Fi signal to parts of the house where the signal is currently weak.

Wireless interference: Wi-Fi uses the same public radio frequencies as garage door openers, microwave ovens and cordless phones, so keep your PC as far from those devices as possible.

You can also get radio interference from a neighbor's Wi-Fi. That can be fixed by switching your cable modem-router to a different Wi-Fi frequency (see tinyurl.com/hyz-8vee.) Every modem-router brand is different, so consult your owner's manual about how to change the channels.

Hardware issues: The cable modem-wireless router or the computer's Wi-Fi adapter could be failing. To check the router, see if smartphones or Wi-Fi equipped TVs can still connect to it. Check the Wi-Fi adapter by running the Network Troubleshooter in Windows 7, 8 or 10 (see tinyurl.com/zusrw7d). For a Mac, see tinyurl.com/h6muwvt.

Software problems: Computer software conflicts can interfere with Wi-Fi or wired internet connections. To test for this, connect the computer to the router via cable. If there's still no internet connection, a software conflict is probably the cause. To fix that, use Windows System Restore (see tinyurl.com/2qhd77), which returns PC settings to the way they were on an earlier date, and also eliminates software installed after that date. The Mac Time Machine program can restore your operating system to an earlier date if you've already used it (see tinyurl.com/jlej3jc). If none of this works, see the answer to the next question.

Q: Either my Web browser or my Wi-Fi internet connection stops working after I'm online for about five minutes. Comcast found that my cable modem-router is creating a strong Wi-Fi signal, and a repair shop found no problems with my four-year-old Dell laptop, an Inspiron model 17R 5721 that runs Windows 10. What's wrong?

A: You can try the wireless interference and software problem solutions in the previous answer, but Windows 10 may be the cause. Your laptop, which came with Windows 8, isn't on Dell's list of PCs that can be upgraded to Windows 10 (see tinyurl.com/zttmt8w). You may need to revert to Windows 8.1 (now about $50.) That will erase your hard drive, so back up your data. You'll need to restore your data and reinstall your programs afterward.

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.

1 small delivery for a man, 1 giant leap for Amazon, drones

ATLANTA (AP)—Drone delivery has begun.

On Dec. 7, a bag of popcorn, along with an Amazon Fire TV stick, left a Cambridge warehouse in the U.K. and 13 minutes later, both were accepted by an Amazon customer, one of two who had agreed to be part of the test program.

A video posted by Amazon shows a fully autonomous drone, no humans involved, taking off from the warehouse and flying over fields to deposit the package just outside the customer's home.

Amazon, with drones, aims to make deliveries in 30 minutes or less. Packages must weigh five pounds or less and can only be delivered during the day and in clear weather. The Seattle-based company plans to expand the trial to hundreds of users.

Off The Wall

Police: Notorious 86-year-old jewel thief strikes again

ATLANTA (AP)—An 86-year-old jewel thief who has kept jewelry sellers on their toes since the 1970s has struck again, police say—this time by slipping a $2,000 diamond necklace into her pocket.

Doris Payne, who has been the subject of a documentary and casually said during an Associated Press interview earlier this year that "I was a thief," was arrested Tuesday at a Von Maur department store outside Atlanta.

Payne was arrested after she put the necklace in her back pocket and tried to leave the store, Dunwoody police spokesman Mark Stevens said in an email. She faces a shoplifting charge.

Online jail records did not show any bond information, and it wasn't clear whether Payne had an attorney who could comment.

Attorney Shawn McCullers, who represented her last year when she was accused of pocketing a $690 pair of earrings from a Saks Fifth Avenue department store at a mall in Atlanta's upscale Buckhead neighborhood, said in an email Wednesday that he was not currently representing her in the latest arrest.

Authorities have said Payne has lifted pricey baubles from countless jewelry stores around the world in an illicit career that has spanned six decades. The legend of Payne's alleged thefts have long fascinated the public and media, with countless news stories and a 2013 documentary film, "The Life and Crimes of Doris Payne," detailing her feats.

When asked about her exploits in the interview with The Associated Press earlier this year, she said simply: "I was a thief."

Court papers in Atlanta reference six cases prior to the alleged theft last year, mostly in southern California, dating to 1999.

Payne was raised in West Virginia and moved with her family to Ohio when she was a teenager.

Authorities have said she has used at least 22 aliases over the years and probably got away more often than she was caught, though she has done several stints in prison. The Jewelers' Security Alliance, an industry trade group, sent out bulletins as early as the 1970s warning about her.

Payne told the AP she realized a simple distraction could make it easy to slip out with a fancy trinket in hand after a friendly store owner let her try on watches as a child and then forgot she had the jewelry on. Her career was born in her 20s when she got the idea that she could support herself by lifting jewelry.

Payne, who appeared effortlessly elegant and spoke with calm deliberation during the interview with the AP, nevertheless grew cagey when asked about her methods.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Report: City booked $629 hotel rooms for homeless people

NEW YORK (AP)—A report says New York City paid a rate of $629 a night to house homeless people at a hotel on two days in September. The report was issued Wednesday by Comptroller Scott Stringer. It says the city booked 30 Manhattan hotel rooms at that rate on Sept. 19 and 20. The mayor's office says Manhattan hotel costs rose on those days because of United Nations meetings. The report says over a year there were 815 bookings at two Manhattan hotels for $400 a night or more. It says the average daily rate paid by the city is around $194. A spokesman for the Department of Homeless Services says its average cost for a hotel room per night is about $174 for a family. A mayoral spokeswoman says the city works to contain costs.

With 'Ditto' in lights, family concedes to next-door display

WESTLAND, Mich. (AP)—A suburban Detroit family is conceding that it can't match the neighbors' holiday display. The Detroit News reports that Jami Kelly used plywood and a few strings of white lights to form the word "Ditto" with an arrow pointing toward the home next-door in Westland. The 34-year-old says her family started doing its own light display, but realized that the creation couldn't compare. She says: "Nothing measures up." Kelly's neighbors have an elaborate display, including reindeer, a large snow globe and a huge bear on the roof. Kelly says she got the idea for her own display online.

Military wife gets creative for family Christmas photo

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (AP)—A military wife and mom in Colorado has come up with a unique way to include her deployed husband in this year's family Christmas photo. Brandon Sistrunk isn't set to return from his southwest Asia deployment until next month. After seeing her friends' family Christmas photos, his wife, Ashley, wanted to make sure Brandon was included in theirs. So, she had Brandon take a photo on base while holding a sign reading, "Merry." She took a photo alongside their four children while holding a sign that read "Christmas." After putting the pictures together digitally, she had her family Christmas photo. The picture has gone viral since she posted it on Instagram last week . She says the attention is "bringing light to the other half" of military families.

Man robs bank with note written on rehab discharge papers

MALVERN, Pa. (AP)—Police say a Philadelphia man signed himself out of a Chester County drug and alcohol rehab center, took a cab to a nearby bank and robbed it using a note scribbled on his discharge papers. Twenty-five-year-old Jamal Goodwin was arrested Tuesday and charged with robbery, theft and other offenses stemming from Monday's holdup at Malvern Federal Savings Bank. Police say Goodwin took just over $5,000 in cash before fleeing in a Main Line Taxi cab. Unfortunately for Goodwin, police say he left behind a gym bag containing $2,700 worth of the stolen money in the cab along with his wallet and driver's license. Also in the car were two sweatshirts that a bank teller said belonged to the robber. It's unclear if Goodwin has an attorney who could comment.

To My New Home In Paradise
Antonia Pangelinan Mafnas Apatang
[Affectionately known as "Tonie" or "Tonka"]
passed away in Honolulu, Hawaii on Monday, December 12, 2016.
Masses of intention are offered daily at San Antonio Church at 6:00 p.m. followed immediately with the recitation of the Holy Rosary.
Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date.
Your thoughts, presence and most especially your prayers are sincerely appreciated.
Mayor David M. Apatang
Children, grandchildren and families
Victoria Pangelinan Mafnas Concepcion
& children & families

Life & Style

TV's Evancho to sing national anthem at Trump inauguration

WASHINGTON (AP)—"America's Got Talent" star Jackie Evancho will sing the national anthem at Donald Trump's inauguration on Jan. 20.

The 16-year-old Evancho said Wednesday on NBC's "Today," ''I'm so excited. It's going to be awesome."

Trump's communications director for the inaugural committee confirmed the booking on Twitter, calling Evancho "an inspiration for all Americans."

Beyonce performed the national anthem at President Barack Obama's January 2013 inauguration. She later said she'd lip synced the song.

Evancho is a Pittsburgh native and a soprano who has performed in Washington before. She has performed at the Independence Day concert "A Capitol Fourth" along with the lighting of the national Christmas tree and the National Prayer Breakfast.

In 2010, she was the runner-up on NBC's "America's Got Talent."

In a Sept. 22, 2014 file photo, classical crossover singer Jackie Evancho poses for a portrait in New York. AP

Who else sang the anthem at inaugurations?

On Wednesday, President-elect Donald Trump picked "America's Got Talent" star Jackie Evancho to sing the national anthem at his Jan. 20 inauguration. Here's a list of some previous singers who sang at presidential inaugurations:

John F Kennedy, 1961: Contralto Marian Anderson sang "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965: The United States Marine Band performed the national anthem

Richard Nixon, 1969: The Mormon Tabernacle Choir accompanied by the United States Marine Band performed the national anthem.

Richard Nixon, 1973: Jazz great Ethel Ennis sang the national anthem.

Jimmy Carter, 1977: Cantor Isaac Goodfriend, a Holocaust survivor, accompanied by the U.S. Marine Band sang the national anthem.

Ronald Reagan, 1981: Amateur singer Juanita Booker sang the national anthem.

Ronald Reagan, 1985: The United States Marine Band performed "The Star-Spangled Banner." (Opera singer Jessye Norman also performed.)

George Bush, 1989: Staff Sergeant Alvy Powell of the U.S. Army Band sang the national anthem.

Bill Clinton, 1993: Opera singer Marilyn Horne sang the national anthem.

Bill Clinton, 1997: Santita Jackson — the daughter of the Rev. Jesse Jackson — and the Resurrection Choir sang the national anthem. (Jessye Norman also performed.)

George W. Bush, 2001: Army Staff Sgt. Alec T. Maly sang the national anthem.

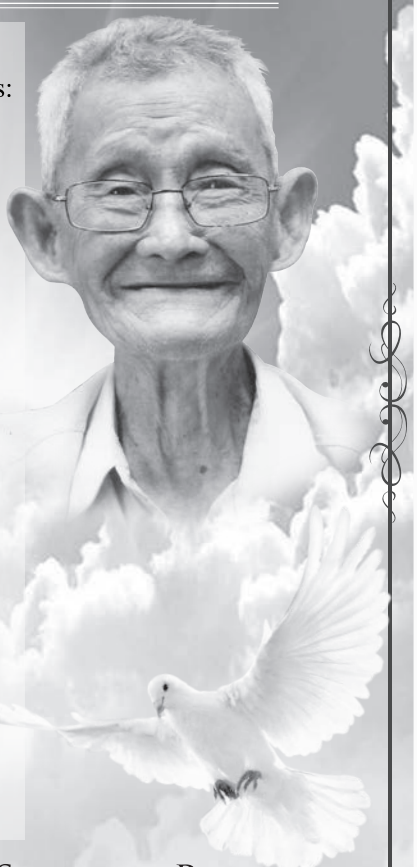
George W. Bush, 2005: Air Force Tech. Sgt. Bradley Bennett sang the national anthem. Singers Susan Graham and Denyce Graves also performed.

Barack Obama, 2009: The United States Navy Band Sea Chanters sang the national anthem. (Aretha Franklin also performed.)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

†Jose Iglesias Torres

AUGUST 20, 1923 – DECEMBER 10, 2016



In his new life, he now joins his:
Mother: **†Carmen I. Torres**
Father: **†Felix Palacios Torres**

His Love and Memories will forever remain in the hearts of his wife, **Adoracion Torres** and numerous relatives and friends.

Daily Mass of Intention is being offered at San Antonio Church at 6:00 p.m.

His funeral will be held on Monday, December 19, 2016. His body will be escorted from CHC morgue at 9:00 a.m. to San Antonio Church.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 1:00 p.m. followed by Interment Services at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be at a peaceful rest.

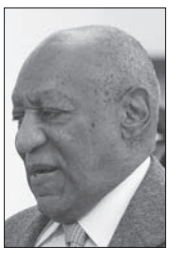
THANK YOU AND SALAMAT PO

Please join us in prayers.

THE FAMILY

Cosby lawyer attacks 'bandwagon' accusers

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (AP)—Bill Cosby's lawyers on Wednesday attacked what they called "vague, remote and often inconsistent" allegations from a slew of women whom prosecutors are seeking to call as witnesses at his sexual-assault trial next year.



Cosby

Lawyers for the 79-year-old actor and comedian asked a judge to block 13 accusers from taking the witness stand, saying uncertainty about where and when some of the sexual encounters took place made them impossible to defend against.

Cosby, who was known as America's Dad for his top-rated family sitcom, "The Cosby Show," which ran from 1984 to 1992, is charged with molesting a woman at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004.

Prosecutors are seeking testimony from the other accusers to show Cosby had a long history of knocking out women with drugs and drinks and sexually assaulting them. Cosby has pleaded not guilty.

At a hearing, the defense portrayed the potential prosecution witnesses as "bandwagon" accusers who came forward because they sought to cash in on Cosby's fame and wealth.

The women went public at the urging of "clever, cunning lawyers who had the agenda of bringing down an American icon," Cosby lawyer Brian McMonagle told Montgomery County Judge Steven O'Neill, who must determine whether some or all of the accusers will be permitted to take the witness stand.

The two-day hearing closed without a decision, with the judge saying he'd take some time before ruling.

McMonagle argued prosecutors dredged up unsubstantiated assault allegations dating to the 1960s to try to breathe life into a weak case, and he urged the judge to "follow the money" when examining the motives of the accusers.

"There's no good reason in this world for these uncorroborated, unconfirmed, unreported, ancient allegations to be brought into this courtroom or any courtroom in this country," he said afterward.

Cosby is charged with assaulting Andrea Constand, then a Temple University employee. She filed a police complaint against Cosby, a long-married father of five and her friend and mentor, but a prosecutor at the time declined to file charges.

Authorities reopened the investigation last year after scores of women raised similar accusations and after Cosby's damaging deposition testimony from Constand's lawsuit became public.

The judge ruled last week the deposition may be used at Cosby's criminal trial, arming prosecutors with Cosby's testimony about his affairs with young women, his use of quaaludes as a seduction tool and his version of the sexual encounter with Constand.

Cosby's attorney said Constand has offered shifting accounts of the encounter, making comparisons with the other accusers impossible. Under state law, prosecutors must demonstrate substantial similarities in the accusers' accounts to be able to call them to the witness stand.

Prosecutors have argued sexual-assault victims often recall more details in subsequent interviews, and they say the discrepancies in Constand's accounts aren't material to the case.

Ringling picks 1st female ringmaster in 146-year history

ELLENTON, Fla. (AP)—The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus has its first female ringmaster.

Feld Entertainment Inc. is the parent company of the Florida-based circus. The company said in a statement Wednesday that Michelle Wilson will be the first-ever female ringmaster in its 146-year history.

Wilson starts her new role next month and her first performance will be in her hometown of Orlando, Florida, during "Circus Xtreme" show.

She will become the 39th ringmaster in Ringling Bros.' history.

Wilson has a professional background in theater and singing.

A ringmaster typically introduces each act in the circus.

Tapestry from Hitler's Eagle's Nest returning to Germany

AP

This Nov. 7, 2016 image from video provided by HISTORY Canada & More4 shows a 16th century tapestry at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans that had been in Adolf Hitler's retreat in the Bavarian Alps. Looking at the tapestry are Dr. Nick Mueller, top left, and Toni Kiser, right, both from the museum, Cathy Hinz, bottom left, the daughter of Lt. Col. Paul Danahy, the American officer who took the tapestry from Hitler's Eagle's Nest in 1945, and Robert Edsel, presenter of the television documentary series "Hunting Nazi Treasure."

DALLAS (AP)—Growing up, Cathy Hinz and her five siblings would run up and down the stairs at their Minneapolis home, one hand on the banister, the other skimming a memento hanging on the wall that their father had brought back after fighting in World War II: a 16th century tapestry that once graced Adolf Hitler's retreat perched high in the Bavarian Alps.

On Friday, that tapestry, purchased for Hitler's Eagle's Nest the year before the war began from a Munich art gallery owned by a Jewish family, will be formally returned in a ceremony in Germany. It will eventually be displayed at the Bavarian National Museum in Munich.

"The tapestry has been on a journey, and now it's going home," Hinz said.

The tapestry's trip back to Germany began when Hinz gave it to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Enough was known about its past that Gordon "Nick" Mueller, president and CEO of the museum, and Robert Edsel, a board member and founder of the Dallas-based Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art, knew it needed to be returned to its rightful owner.

So Edsel began untangling the mystery.

Hinz's father, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Paul Danahy, often told the story of taking the tapestry after being struck by the historical significance of the moment after his 101st Airborne Division made it to the Eagle's Nest above Berchtesgaden and began interrogating German officers. Danahy, who served in the war as an intelligence officer, died in 1986 at the age of 71, and the tapestry eventually landed on the wall of Hinz's dining room.

Seeing carefully preserved tapestries on a trip to Italy in 2000 gave Hinz pause about continuing to keep the 7-foot-by-7-foot tapestry depicting a courtly hunting scene. She knew it was time to let go of it, she just wasn't sure how.

Edsel said the key was determining whether the September 1938 sale of the tapestry would have been considered forced. His foundation endeavors not only to honor but also continue the work of the Monuments Men, a group of art experts from more than a dozen countries who worked with Allied forces to protect cultural treasures during the war, and afterward to return works stolen by the Nazis.

Oprah Winfrey to call her book imprint 'An Oprah Book'

NEW YORK (AP)—Oprah Winfrey's new book imprint has an easy name to remember.

She's calling it "An Oprah Book," Flatiron Books told The Associated Press on Wednesday. A division of Macmillan, Flatiron first announced in 2015 that it would work with Winfrey on a line of nonfiction books, personally selected by her. The first release, Winfrey's "Food, Health and Happiness" cookbook, is coming out Jan. 3. The second book, also announced Wednesday and scheduled for 2018, is Maria Smilios' "The Black Angels: The Untold Story of the Nurses Who Helped Cure Tuberculosis." The book tells of 300 black nurses who helped prevent a public health crisis.

In a statement issued through Flatiron, Winfrey said "The Black Angels" was a story of heroism and achievement that "needed to be shared."

Patti Smith explains Dylan lyric flub in candid essay

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Patti Smith says that when she stumbled over the lyrics of a Bob Dylan song during the Nobel Prize ceremony last week, it was because she was overwhelmed with nerves by the enormity of the experience, not because she forgot the words to "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall."

Smith writes in an essay published Wednesday by the New Yorker that after loving the song since she was a teenager and rehearsing it incessantly in the months and days leading up to the ceremony, its lyrics "were now a part of me."

"I hadn't forgotten the words that were now a part of me,» she writes. "I was simply unable to draw them out."

The singer-songwriter explains that she had chosen one of her own songs when she was invited in September to perform at the Nobel ceremony in honor of the eventual literature laureate. But when Dylan was announced as the recipient, she chose one of her longtime favorites from his catalog.

Smith writes that on the morning of the ceremony, "I thought of my mother, who bought me my first Dylan album when I was barely sixteen."

"It occurred to me then that, although I did not live in the time of Arthur Rimbaud, I existed in the time of Bob Dylan," Smith writes. "I also thought of my husband and remembered performing the song together, picturing his hands forming the chords."

Smith suddenly stopped singing during her performance at Stockholm's Concert Hall on Dec. 10 and asked the orchestra to begin again. "I apologize. I›m sorry, I›m so nervous," Smith said at the time.

In her candid, poetic piece published Wednesday, she says guests at the ceremony received her kindly and told her that her performance «seemed a metaphor for our own struggles.» She says the experience made her «come to terms with the truer nature of my duty."

"Why do we commit our work? Why do we perform?" she writes. "It is above all for the entertainment and transformation of the people. It is all for them. The song asked for nothing. The creator of the song asked for nothing. So why should I ask for anything?"

Mom and daughter launch into premature ring-shopping

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been dating for almost eight months. We love each other and talk often about marriage, family, etc.

The other night—just for fun—I looked online at rings and showed my mom a few I really loved. She quickly dismissed all of them, and started telling me how I need a big stone and that it needs to be expensive. Then she went online and looked herself and was telling me which ones I should be interested in. Mom offered to take me to a jeweler's to find the "perfect" ring.

She has always been a helicopter parent, but now, as my boyfriend and I are becoming more serious, she's going into warp drive. How can I tell her gently to butt out? Also, what's your advice on the ring situation?

DAUGHTER OF A HELICOPTER MOM

DEAR DAUGHTER: You and your mother are both jumping the gun. "Talking often of marriage, family, etc." is not an engagement. If you allow your mother to involve herself in this, I predict you will never get engaged because your boyfriend -- if he's smart -- will run for the hills. When and if you do decide to tie the knot, the two of you should go to a jeweler together and select something he can afford and you will enjoy wearing. Period.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a young woman in my 20s. I have been blessed with a loving family, lots of opportunities and people who care about me. My problem is, I don't feel worthy of any of it.

A lot of the time when I'm around people, I feel like I'm on the outside looking in -- like an intruder. When I join groups and listen, I feel like I'm eavesdropping. When I try to pitch in, I feel like I'm annoying everyone. I try to be like people who other people like, but I feel I fall far short of the mark.

I wish I could change and be less irritating and more interesting, but I don't know how to change my personality, or even if I could. I'm just tired of not feeling worthy enough. I know this feeling isn't rational, but it's here to stay, apparently. What should I do?

UNWORTHY

DEAR UNWORTHY: There is nothing so defeating to social success than low self-esteem -- feeling undeserving and not good enough. The first thing you should do is stop trying to change yourself to please others because it doesn't work. Then try to pinpoint where these feelings of unworthiness originated. If you can't manage it on your own—many people can't—make an appointment to discuss it with a licensed mental health professional. You deserve to feel good about yourself and what you contribute.

DEAR ABBY: Years ago, it was considered improper to send a holiday card to a friend or family member who experienced the loss of a child or spouse during the year.

What is correct today? And what about an invitation to a party?

CAREFUL IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR CAREFUL: If there was a "rule" that people who have suffered a loss should not receive a holiday card, I have never heard of it. One would think that those who are grieving would appreciate knowing they were being remembered.

As to inviting the person to a party—not everyone grieves in the same way or for the same length of time. Unless religious custom prevents it, if you think the friend or relative might enjoy the event, by all means extend an invitation. The invitee can always refuse if it's too soon.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

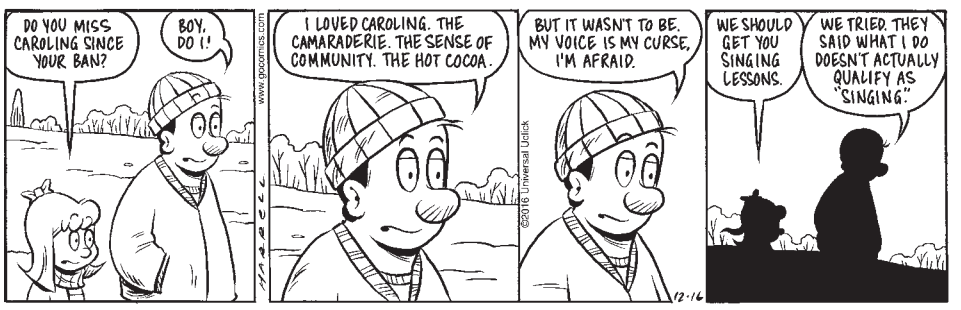
HOW IS IT THAT THIS OUIJA BOARD KNOWS ALL THE ANSWERS TO LIFE'S MYSTERIES?
LET'S ASK IT.
OH GREAT OUIJA BOARD, HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THE ANSWERS?
IT'S MOVING! IT'S MOVING!
WHAT'S IT SAY?
"3."
YOU KNOW, I DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS LAST CHRISTMAS. I ASKED FOR A COMPUTER.
12-16

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DO YOU MISS CAROLING SINCE YOUR BAN?
BOY, DO I!
I LOVED CAROLING. THE CAMARADERIE. THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY. THE HOT COCOA.
BUT IT WASN'T TO BE. MY VOICE IS MY CURSE, I'M AFRAID.
WE SHOULD GET YOU SINGING LESSONS.
WE TRIED. THEY SAID WHAT I DO DOESN'T ACTUALLY QUALIFY AS "SINGING."
www.gocomics.com
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12-16

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I SMELL COFFEE. TOO MUCH CAFFEINE ISN'T GOOD FOR YOU.
AH HAVEN'T HAD ANY TODAY.
THEN IT MUST BE THIS STIRRER FROM MY CAPPUCCINO.
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12/16

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

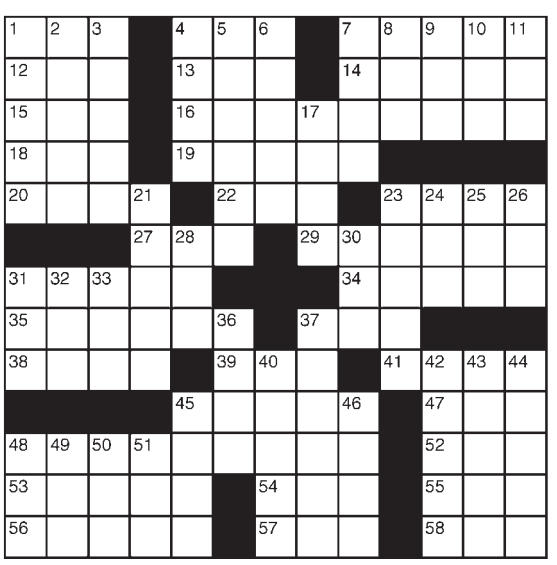
ACROSS
1 Spigot
4 Owned
7 Fragrant wood
12 Vitamin stat
13 Mouths (Lat.)
14 Representative
15 Altar affirmative
16 1970s political scandal
18 Army rank (Abbr.)
19 Blow one's top
20 Make a sweater
22 Paris pal
23 Speedy steed
27 Frequently
29 Organize an art show
31 Ritzy violin
34 Like notebook paper
35 Obsess
37 Sault — Marie
38 Towering
39 — Dhabi
41 Don't have
45 Senior moments?
47 "The Raven" writer
48 Bees do it
52 Trigger's rider
53 Monastery VIP
54 Actor Harrison
55 Mamie's man
56 Singer Elliott
57 Parched
58 "Acid"

DOWN
1 Ruse
2 Attach
3 Town on Philly's Main Line
4 Hockey's Gordie
5 Noah's landfall
6 Fact
7 Shopper's aid
8 Ovum
9 Narc's org.
10 Hill dweller
11 Hwy.
17 Grand tale
21 Sum
23 Disney mermaid
24 Scooted
25 Packed away
26 Nap site
28 In shape
30 Last (Abbr.)
31 Astern
32 Soccer's Hamm
33 Rocker Rose
36 Deserve
37 Historic South Carolina fort
40 Plank
42 Earth Day month
43 Diner workers
44 — up (excited)
45 Compassion
46 Hot
48 Shriver of tennis
49 Kimono sash
50 Scale abbr.
51 Part of UCLA

Solution time: 27 mins.

H	U	M	■	W	I	P	E	■	B	O	S	H
I	S	A	■	A	M	O	R	■	O	R	E	O
M	A	C	A	R	O	O	N	■	O	S	L	O
■	■	K	I	M	■	L	I	F	T	O	F	F
T	H	I	R	T	Y	■	E	E	L	■	■	■
R	U	N	■	H	A	M	■	D	E	M	O	S
A	L	A	W	■	M	A	Y	■	G	A	V	E
M	A	C	A	W	■	P	E	T	■	C	A	T
■	■	■	S	O	L	■	S	H	O	A	L	S
P	A	R	S	N	I	P	■	E	R	R	■	■
A	S	I	A	■	M	A	C	B	O	O	K	S
C	H	A	I	■	B	L	U	E	■	N	I	A
T	E	L	L	■	O	O	P	S	■	I	N	N

Yesterday's answer 12-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Hallee Hirsh, 29; Benjamin Bratt, 53; Sam Robards, 55; Billy Gibbons, 67.

Happy Birthday: Take the initiative to protect and be proactive when it comes to health, wealth and legal matters. The decisions you make will have an influence on how well you do in the future. Taking liberties without thinking about the emotional consequences will be your downfall. Precision, detail and putting alternatives in place will guarantee your success. Your numbers are 6, 13, 19, 24, 31, 38, 49.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Taking better care of your emotional and physical well-being is encouraged. Participate in community events, helping others and networking with people who can help you get ahead. Romance is featured. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Emotional encounters will not be in your best interest. If you feel the least bit uncertain, back away and wait until you have clarification from someone you trust. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A well-rounded view will encourage you to make wise choices. Look at what's trending and how you can update your look without going over budget. Share your feelings with someone you love and it will be easier to make a decision about your future. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Keep your personal information private even if you feel compelled to share with someone who is trying to find out more about you. Work out all the kinks before you present what you have to offer. Protect your reputation. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Emotions will flare up, leaving you in an awkward position. Sum up what's transpired and consider what you really want. Choose peace over discord and affection over aggression. Personal improvements will turn out well. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Someone you work with will make you look bad if you don't speak up on your own behalf. Don't leave anything to chance and protect your assets, possessions and your health. Refuse to let criticism and unwarranted demands get you down. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't expect to get the go-ahead from someone who is indecisive. You are best to set everything up beforehand and present what you have only when you know it is fail-proof. Set aside time to rejuvenate. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): A day trip, checking out vacation spots or gathering information will encourage you to take on a new endeavor. Monitor any changes you make carefully. Avoid joint ventures and keep your activities within your budget. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Take each situation and analyze what's at stake. What you discover could spark a groundbreaking idea that will encourage you to take on more responsibility. Expand your goals and don't give up until you are satisfied. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't tell someone else's secrets. Indulging in something that isn't any of your business will be costly. Keep your distance and stay focused on what's important to you. Problems will develop if you are too vocal. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You'll have an interesting point of view when it comes to business plans or work schedules. Share your thoughts, but don't exaggerate or you will be expected to live up to the promises you made. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Pay more attention to the way you present who you are and what you represent. Keeping current will help you set the pace instead of trying to keep up with others. Don't limit what you can do. Embrace change. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have spunk, attitude and a willingness to achieve. You are unbeatable.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5						8	
7		8				2		4
			3		6			
		7	8		2	4		
				7				
		4	1		9	6		
			9		3			
6		2				5		3
	3						1	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	7	4	2	9	8	3	1	6
1	9	3	7	5	6	4	8	2
6	8	2	3	1	4	9	5	7
8	2	9	6	4	3	5	7	1
3	5	7	1	8	2	6	4	9
4	1	6	9	7	5	2	3	8
2	4	8	5	6	7	1	9	3
7	3	1	4	2	9	8	6	5
9	6	5	8	3	1	7	2	4

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/15

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

THE WORD IS: MODICUM Solution: 7 letters

C	N	R	C	I	G	O	L	Y	M	O	R	S	E	L
E	O	O	P	J	S	O	C	E	P	O	H	C	Y	O
R	I	N	I	O	R	A	E	S	N	E	S	R	T	T
T	T	O	S	T	V	T	N	R	M	O	T	A	I	S
A	E	H	N	I	S	D	H	I	N	T	T	P	L	U
I	R	O	R	E	D	E	R	T	T	I	Y	E	I	R
N	C	P	T	I	M	E	G	A	N	Y	S	G	B	T
T	S	M	H	N	I	A	R	G	G	I	E	D	A	N
Y	I	O	H	U	O	E	E	A	U	E	T	E	T	I
T	D	R	T	C	M	I	T	S	T	S	R	L	N	A
S	A	A	U	O	N	A	T	R	P	I	U	W	U	R
E	S	L	R	T	U	I	N	C	O	E	O	O	O	T
N	H	S	T	O	I	N	P	I	A	F	C	N	C	S
O	E	C	A	E	P	H	C	N	T	R	F	K	C	E
H	T	R	O	W	P	O	W	E	R	Y	F	E	A	R

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Accountability, Atom, Certainty, Consideration, Control, Courtesy, Dash, Discretion, Effort, Esteem, Fraction, Grain, Hint, Honesty, Honor, Hope, Humanity, Jot, Knowledge, Logic, Morals, Morsel, Ounce, Peace, Pinch, Power, Privacy, Regard, Remorse, Restraint, Sanity, Scrap, Sense, Speck, Suggestion, Time, Tinge, Trust, Truth, Whit, Worth

Yesterday's Answer: Sweater

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- Must be aligned with the core values of accountability, teamwork, trust and integrity
- Customer service oriented with an outgoing personality
- Must be able to work Evenings/Overtime if needed
- Must possess valid CNMI Drivers License
- Must be 18 yrs of age or older
- Must be able to travel

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NO TELEPHONE CALLS PLEASE.

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MARPAC Dist., Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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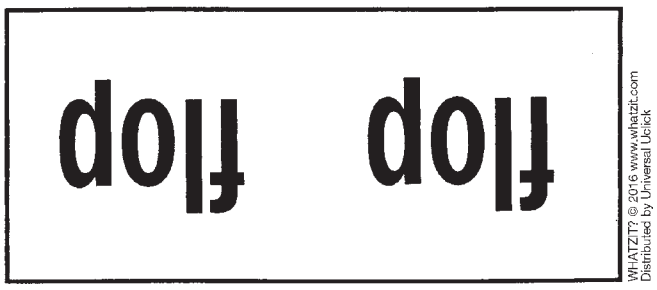

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COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION

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Fax: 1 (670) 233-1856
Email: info@cnmicasinocommission.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Opening Date: **December 16, 2016** Closing Date: **December 31, 2016**

The Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission") announces a Job Vacancy for immediate recruitment for the following position:

	POSITION	DIVISION	SALARY RANGE	ANNOUNCEMENT NO.
1.	**ENFORCEMENT AGENT II**	Enforcement & Investigations	$27,000 - $32,000	CCC-2017-A
2.	**PERMIT & LICENSING CLERK**	Permit & Licensing	$15,000 - $19,800	CCC-2017-B
3.	**TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE SPECIALIST**	Compliance Division	$37,000 - $42,000	CCC-2017-C
4.	**COMPLIANCE AGENT**	Compliance Division	$32,000 - $37,000	CCC-2017-D
5.	**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER –** Procurement Officer	Executive Office	$30,000 - $35,000	CCC-2017-E

- **Salary:** Actual salary level will depend on the applicant's education, experience, and other related qualifications.
- **Location:** Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands ("CNMI").
- **Benefits:** Basic CNMI government employment fringe benefits.
- **Exempted Positions:** This position is exempted from the CNMI Civil Service system per P.L. 18-56 & P.L. 19-24.

Requirements:

A. CNMI Government **Application for Employment** (OPM-03) - Original
B. Resume with accompanying educational and professional credentials & documentations
C. Police Clearance (within the last 3 months)
D. Copy of your Driver's License or other form of **Valid Identification with photo**

Education and training claimed under items 24 (A) through (H) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by an official school transcript, diploma, or certificate. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification.

The Commonwealth Casino Commission is an equal employment opportunity employer. The CCC's EEO policy is to ensure that all employment decisions are made on a non-discriminatory basis, and without regard to sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief, or any other status protected by applicable national, federal, state or local law. Please be informed that prior to a job offer, you are required to undergo a pre-employment drug test pursuant to the Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy, Part V.C. of the Personnel Service System Rules and Regulations. The Casino Commission may also require additional criminal background checks and investigations if deemed necessary.

Application Forms can be picked up at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). For information on the **POSITION DESCRIPTION** and other requirements, please contact the HR Officer, Ms. Juanette LG. Sablan at 233-1857/58 or at info@cnmicasinocommission.com. Interested persons should submit their Employment Application Forms along with supporting documents to the **Commonwealth Casino Commission's Office at Springs Plaza (Unit #13 & #14), Gualo Rai, Saipan, MP 96950.**

Harden's triple-double helps Houston to 8th straight win

HOUSTON (AP)—James Harden's latest game left him tied in Houston's record books with perhaps the greatest Rocket of all.

Harden had a triple-double—15 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds—in just three quarters to lead the Rockets to their eighth straight win, 132-98 over the short-handed Sacramento Kings on Wednesday night.

It was Harden's fifth triple-double this season and the 14th of his career, which ties him with Hakeem Olajuwon for most in franchise history. Harden acknowledged how special it is to be mentioned in the same breath as The Dream.

"Yes, obviously all-time Rockets great, best to ever do it (in) a Rocket uniform and one of the best to ever do it period," Harden said. "So just honored. It's a credit to my teammates who helped me and coaches and just trying to win. That's all."

Houston's winning streak is the longest current one in the NBA and the team's longest since 2014.

"The biggest thing I'm happy with is we had 40 assists on 50 buckets, so they're sharing the ball," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "James does what he does every night and just a lot of good stuff going on."

Harden's triple-double came in 29 minutes and 52 seconds of play, which is his second when playing less than 30 minutes.

Houston led by 15 points in the third quarter before using a 10-4 run to push it to 76-53 with about 7 minutes left in the quarter. The Rockets began to pour it on after that, outscoring the Kings 18-5 over the next 3 1/2 minutes to make it 94-58. Trevor Ariza scored the first five points in that span and capped it with a 3-pointer.

Harden grabbed his 10th rebound soon after that and got one more late in the third before heading to the bench at the end of the quarter to end his night.

Wizards 109, Hornets 106

In Washington, John Wall and Bradley Beal combined for 19 of their 45 points in the third quarter, Washington's highest-scoring period this season, and the Wizards came back to beat the Charlotte Hornets 109-106 Wednesday night, handing the Southeast Division leaders their third consecutive loss.

Wall, wearing bright orange neon shoes, outplayed Hornets star Kemba Walker, finishing with more points (25-17) and assists (10-9), along with seven steals to become Washington's franchise leader in that category.

Beal, 0 for 6 in the first half, took over for part of the third, scoring 11 points, mostly via a trio of 3s, and finished with 20 points and a career-high nine assists.

Charlotte got within two on Cody Zeller's layup with 10.6 seconds remaining. Wall made one of two free throws a second later, and Nicolas Batum and Walker both missed 3s that would have tied it.

In the third, Washington went from trailing by 10 points to leading 79-71 thanks to a 23-5 burst, part of a 38-23 edge in the quarter.

Charlotte (14-12) is 0-3 to start a five-game road trip.

Grizzlies 93, Cavaliers 85

In Memphis, Tenn., Troy Daniels scored 20 points and Marc Gasol had 17 points and 11 rebounds to lead Memphis over the short-handed Cleveland Cavaliers, who left their top three players at home to rest.

Tony Allen added 16 points, eight rebounds and three steals as the Grizzlies won for the seventh time in eight games. The only loss during that stretch was a 110-89 defeat Tuesday night in Cleveland.

LeBron James, Kyrie Irving and Kevin Love did not make the trip for the Cavs, leaving an average of more than 70 points per game back in Cleveland.

The result was the Cavaliers setting a season low for points and hitting only nine 3-pointers—matching their fewest in a game this season.

James Jones led Cleveland with 15 points.

Jazz 109, Thunder 89

In Salt Lake City, Rodney Hood scored 25 points and Utah defeated Oklahoma City to break a tie between the teams atop the Northwest Division.

Utah led from start to finish behind 58.3 percent shooting and showed why it's one of the best defensive teams in the NBA, holding the Thunder to 36.6 percent from the field.

Gordon Hayward scored 17 for the Jazz, who have won nine of 11. Rudy Gobert added 12 points, 12 rebounds and three blocks.

Russell Westbrook paced the Thunder with 27 points, six rebounds and five assists. He shot 7 for 25 from the floor.

Enes Kanter scored 19 for Oklahoma City against his former team.

Spurs 108, Celtics 101

In San Antonio, Kawhi Leonard scored 26 points and San Antonio played its second consecutive solid home game in holding off Boston.

Spurs point guard Tony Parker had 16 points, including 10 in the final period.

Pau Gasol had 17 points and 13 rebounds for San Antonio, which has won three straight at the AT&T Center after dropping three of its first four at home. The Spurs (20-5) are 7-4 at home after matching an NBA record with a 40-1 mark last season.

The Spurs had 33 assists on 44 field goals while shooting 55 percent from the field and winning their 11th straight over Boston.

Boston was without injured leading scorer Isaiah Thomas. San Antonio rested starting power forward LaMarcus Aldridge, and both teams showed off their depth.

Avery Bradley had 25 points and 10 assists for the Celtics.

Heat 95, Pacers 89

In Miami, Hassan Whiteside had 26 points and 22 rebounds, Tyler Johnson scored 15 off the bench and Miami beat Indiana.

James Johnson added 14 points for the Heat, who outrebounded Indiana 58-38 and won consecutive games at home for the first time all season.

Paul George scored 22 for the Pacers, who were hoping for a season-best third straight win and instead managed just 10 points in the fourth quarter.

Raptors 123, 76ers 114

In Philadelphia, DeMar DeRozan scored 31 points and Kyle Lowry added 20 in his Philadelphia homecoming to help Toronto win its fourth straight.

DeRozan had 31 points through three quarters in his second consecutive 30-point game. The Atlantic Division-leading Raptors (18-7) have won 10 of 11 and are 11 games over .500 for the first time this season.

The 76ers were trying to win three straight games for the first time since taking four in a row from Dec. 29, 2013-Jan. 4, 2014.

Robert Covington led the Sixers with 26 points.

Clippers 113, Magic 108

In Orlando, Fla., Austin Rivers made seven 3-pointers and scored 25 points in his return from a concussion to help Los Angeles beat Orlando for its third straight victory.

Rivers hit the key shot when he buried a 3 from the corner with 2 minutes left to give the Clippers a nine-point lead.

Blake Griffin added 23 points, and DeAndre Jordan had 22 points and 12 rebounds. Jordan, who often struggles from the foul line, made 12 of 18 free throws.

Aaron Gordon had 33 points for the Magic, and Evan Fournier added 24.

Nets 107, Lakers 97

In New York, Bojan Bogdanovic scored 23 points, Sean Kilpatrick had 22 and Brooklyn sent Los Angeles to its eighth straight loss.

Brook Lopez added 20 points for the Nets, who played without Jeremy Lin again but avoided a third consecutive defeat. Trevor Booker grabbed a season-high 18 rebounds.

Lou Williams scored 16 points for the Lakers, who have fallen from a .500 team early in Luke Walton's first season as coach to one that is 10-18. They shot 38.5 percent from the field and were dismal as well from 3-point range (22 percent) and the free throw line (61.8).

Pistons 95, Mavericks 85

In Dallas, Reggie Jackson scored 20 points and Andre Drummond led a dominant rebounding effort with 17 as Detroit topped Dallas.

Jon Leuer had a season-high 19 points off the bench as the Pistons beat the team with the worst record in the Western Conference three nights after losing to Philadelphia, the last-place team in the East.

Drummond had 10 rebounds in the first 7 1/2 minutes and the Pistons had a 29-9 edge on the boards at halftime and 50-30 for the game.

Harrison Barnes led the Mavericks with 19 points.

AP

Houston Rockets' James Harden (13) celebrates after making a 3-point basket against the Sacramento Kings during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016, in Houston.

NBA, players reach tentative agreement on labor deal

MIAMI (AP)—The NBA and its players have agreed to keep the most lucrative era in league history rolling.

The sides agreed Wednesday in principle on a new collective bargaining agreement, one that could last up to seven years and needs now only to be ratified by players and owners in the coming weeks. The deal was struck a day before the sides faced a deadline for opting out of the current deal.

If approved by votes of players and owners—likely to be formalities—there will be no lockout next summer and no labor issues for years to come.

"It's amazing. I'm excited," union president Chris Paul of the Los Angeles Clippers said. "I'm happy for our fans, the owners involved. It's a great thing."

Three people briefed on the terms said the deal extends for seven seasons, with an opt-out possible after six. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because neither side was releasing exact details.

If the deal is ratified, the season will start a week earlier, preseason games would be capped at six and one of the most dreaded elements of the schedule—the four-game-in-five-day stretches—may be eliminated.

Other details of the new proposed CBA include increases in values of rookie-scale contracts, minimum salaries and exceptions, with a 45 percent increase in minimum salaries across the board in the first year of the new agreement. The rookie deals will be proportionate to the salary cap, either rising or falling as that does. The average player salary is expected to hit $8.5 million next season and rise to $10 million by 2020-21 under the new terms.

"It's fair. It's fair," said Miami Heat guard Wayne Ellington, his team's player rep to the union. "That's all we were asking for."

With Browns still winless, 2008 Lions can relate

DETROIT (AP)—Detroit long snapper Don Muhlbach was with the Lions back in 2008, when they became the first—and so far, the only—NFL team to go 0-16.

This season, as the Cleveland Browns approach that mark of infamy, Muhlbach would rather not see a sequel.

"That was a brutal year," Muhlbach said. "As a football player to another football player, I hope no one else has to go through that."

The Browns have three more chances to avoid a winless season, starting with this weekend's game at Buffalo. If Cleveland does finish 0-16, those 2008 Lions would have company in that pitiable club, but Detroit isn't exactly buzzing with anticipation.

"Can we wait for them to go 0-16 before I pop champagne?" joked Dominic Raiola, who played center for the Lions from 2001-2014.

All kidding aside, it's not like an 0-16 season in Cleveland would change what the Lions had to endure eight years ago.

"I haven't been following what they've been doing and I don't really care if they win a game or not," said Raiola, now an assistant strength and conditioning coach for the Lions.

The Browns actually have a chance to surpass the 2008 Lions in one measure of futility. Cleveland also lost all four of its preseason games this season. Before Detroit's 0-16 nightmare under Rod Marinelli eight years ago, the Lions managed to win the four games that didn't count.

Of course, even that may have come with a cost.

"We were 4-0 in the preseason and showed our whole hand," said Roy Williams, a wide receiver for that team. "We used all our plays and didn't change anything when the season started."

Williams got off easy that year. He was traded in October to Dallas. But he has some, well, interesting tales.

"What really sums it up is what happened in Atlanta in our first game," Williams said. "We were about to score and (quarterback Jon) Kitna was gesturing to the sideline to let them know that he wasn't hearing a play in his headset. Rod says into the headset, 'Come in Jim! Jim! Colletto!' And Colletto finally answered and said, 'Sorry, coach. I must've dozed off.'"

Colletto, who was Detroit's offensive coordinator that year, says he doesn't remember any incident like that. He says in their Thanksgiving loss to Tennessee, the Lions were penalized for delay of game immediately after a timeout, and he had to apologize to Marinelli because he'd drawn a blank on what play to call.

"There wasn't anybody dozing off," Colletto said.

Colletto can certainly empathize with what Cleveland's coaches are facing now.

"I know (Browns coach) Hue Jackson. There's a lot of good coaches there," Colletto said. "It's hard. It's really hard. I know what they're going through."

The 2008 Lions had their chances to win a game. During one stretch, they dropped games to Minnesota, Houston, Washington and Chicago, all by eight points or fewer. Detroit was even tied in the fourth quarter of the season finale at Green Bay before falling 31-21.

"Every week it just kept building and building," Muhlbach said.

Muhlbach and quarterback Dan Orlovsky are the only current Lions players who were with the team in 2008. Needless to say, it's hard to stay hopeful during a season like that, and players—both in Detroit in 2008 and Cleveland this year—are put to an unenviable test.

AP

In this Nov. 20, 2016, file photo, Cleveland Browns head coach Hue Jackson holds a post game meeting with reporters following an NFL football game against the Pittsburgh Steelers, in Cleveland.

"Be a pro. You have a job to do," said Tampa Bay offensive lineman Gosder Cherilus, who played for the Lions in 2008. "Every day you wake up, don't look at the record. Know you're a big part of the team and every time you have a chance, you want to be a part of the reason they're winning - not part of the reason why they're losing. At the end of the day, not everyone's going to give you their best, but you want to be one of the good guys."

If there's any solace for the Browns, it's that the Lions actually recovered from 0-16 rather quickly. That awful season netted them the No. 1 pick in the 2009 draft, which they used on quarterback Matthew Stafford.

Calvin Johnson was in his second season when the Lions went winless, and he went on to become one of the greatest players in franchise history. Team president Matt Millen was fired during that 2008 season, and Marinelli met the same fate when it was over. The Lions moved on with Martin Mayhew as general manager and Jim Schwartz as coach.

Neither of them is still with the organization, but they helped the Lions recover from depths no team had ever reached. In 2011, Detroit made the playoffs—and Stafford is a big part of this year's NFC North-leading team.

"Yeah, but we could've won one game and still got Stafford," Muhlbach said.

Plenty of teams have hit rock bottom and then returned to respectability. Only one of them went 0-16.

The memories of that season linger for those who experienced it.

"Sometimes when you keep hearing how much of a loser you are, you start to believe it and you accept it. Don't you ever accept that, regardless," Cherilus said. "A lot of people think you win in the National Football League just on talent, but it takes so much more than that. If you look at the Browns, they're just as talented as other teams in the league. That tells you how hard it is to win.

"But I'm rooting for them because I don't wish for that kind of thing to happen to anyone else."

RB Adrian Peterson returning to practice for Vikings

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. (AP)—Adrian Peterson was back on the practice field on Wednesday for the first time in nearly three months, and the Minnesota Vikings hope their star running back can give them the jolt they need to chase down a playoff berth.

Peterson's rehab of a torn meniscus in his right knee is nearly complete, allowing him to rejoin his teammates at practice as he ramps up for a highly anticipated return. Wearing a black brace on his right knee, Peterson took handoffs from Sam Bradford, ran routes and went through some agility drills during the portion of practice that was open to media.

Peterson was not available for comment on Wednesday, but did tell a local website earlier in the week that he is still targeting the Dec. 24 game in Green Bay for his first game since the injury against those same Packers in Week 2.

Coach Mike Zimmer did not rule out Peterson playing against the Indianapolis Colts (6-7) on Sunday, but that appears optimistic at this point. Peterson said last week that he likely would not play in a game this year if the Vikings (7-6) were eliminated from the playoff hunt, but after beating Jacksonville last weekend they remain very much in the mix in the NFC.

"He's been a leader on this team. He's one of the best players in this league and he has been for quite some time," Bradford said. "I think just having him back out at practice in the huddle, I think it's a definite lift to our guys."

The Vikings are operating under the assumption that they have to win their final three games to get into the playoffs, and Peterson's return certainly would increase those odds.

The Vikings offense has struggled mightily to score points and make big plays this season, with an injury-riddled offensive line the primary culprit. Getting a player of Peterson's dynamic ability back into the lineup should help a rushing offense ranked 31st in the league, especially one that struggles in short-yardage situations. The Vikings were stuffed on four downs near the goal line on Sunday against Jacksonville, and Peterson's nose for the end zone, vision and power could make a dramatic difference in that area, among others.

"Any chance you get to add Adrian Peterson back to your lineup, it's a positive," Bradford said. "I think we'll definitely take him back in the lineup regardless of if there's any challenges or not."

Zimmer was pretty tight-lipped about Peterson's presence on Wednesday, not looking to make a very big issue out of it when the timeline for his return in a game remains in question.

Derek Holland agrees to $6M, 1-year contract with White Sox

CHICAGO (AP)—Derek Holland understands the pivot toward youth by the White Sox and thinks he can thrive in Chicago.

"I wasn't too concerned. The whole thing is a process," the 30-year-old left-hander said Wednesday after agreeing to a $6 million, one-year contract. "Whoever is there, I know they're going to be playing to win."

Chicago already has traded ace Chris Sale to Boston and outfielder Adam Eaton to Washington. Other deals could be ahead.

While Holland plans to bring his boxer, Wrigley, to Chicago, he'll leave his five lizards and pet chinchilla at his home in Texas for now.

"You never know what's going to lie ahead," Holland said. "Who knows? I could go up there and have an unbelievable year and end up staying with Chicago."

Holland's deal includes $2 million in performance bonuses: $1 million each for 150 and 200 innings. He was 62-50 with a 4.35 ERA in eight seasons with Texas, which declined an $11 million option and chose to pay a $1.5 million buyout.

"It's just a crazy way that this is over," he said. "I can't believe it's done, but at the same time it was a fun run with Texas. I got to make a lot of memories there. I had a great time."

Holland played on the Rangers' AL champions in 2010 and 2011 but missed significant time the past three seasons because of injuries.

AP

This Sept. 21, 2016 file photo shows Texas Rangers starting pitcher Derek Holland (45) throwing to the Los Angeles Angels in the second inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas.

Holland, who had a $10 million salary this year, missed two months because of inflammation in his left shoulder and finished 7-9 with a 4.95 ERA in 22 games. He won 16 games in 2011.

Part of the attraction of joining with the White Sox was to work with pitching coach Don Cooper, who along with manager Rick Renteria called Holland during the recruiting process. Holland joins a projected rotation that for now includes Jose Quintana, Carlos Rodon, James Shields and Miguel Gonzalez.

"I wasn't too worried about where I was going to be slotted in the rotation," Holland said. "I'm definitely not an ace over here yet. I've got to earn everything."

Chicago designated left-hander Matt Purke for assignment to open a roster spot.

Saipan Duathlon 2016 tomorrow

The Bridge Capital LLC-sponsored Saipan Dualthon 2016 will hit the road tomorrow in Marpi.

The race, which is also supported by Marianas Visitors Authority and Gatorade, will have two divisions: sprint distance and standard. The sprint will cover a five-kilometer run, 20K bike, and 2.5K run and is open to individuals and teams. Individual and team entries are allowed too in the standard distance, which will have participants doing a 10K run, 40K bike, and 5K run.

Registration forms are available at Taro Sue. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top finishers, while raffle prizes will also be given away after the race.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Paul Plunkett, Ronald Villafria, Alex Gozon, Florence Antonio, Bridge Capital LLC business development manager Joseph Guerrero, and Ricky Castro pose for a photo during a donation turnover ceremony for Saipan Duathlon 2016.

For more information, contact swimbikerun.saipan@gmail.com. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Sabathia happy to have Chapman back in Yankees bullpen

NEW YORK (AP)—Given he never pitched into the ninth inning this year, CC Sabathia is happy the New York Yankees brought back Aroldis Chapman.

"It's exciting when he comes in. It just lights up the Stadium," Sabathia said Wednesday at the Yankees' holiday food drive.

New York traded Chapman to the Chicago Cubs in July for prospects, including touted 20-year-old shortstop Gleyber Torres and pitcher Adam Warren.

After helping the Cubs win their first World Series title since 1908, Chapman became a free agent and agreed last week to an $86 million, five-year contract with the Yankees, a deal that has not yet been finalized.

The Yankees also dealt Andrew Miller to Cleveland, leaving Dellin Betances as the remaining reliever from their late-inning triad.

Now Chapman and Betances will form a duo, with Tyler Clippard, Tommy Layne and Chasen Shreve among a large group competing for sixth- and seventh-inning mound time.

"I think with the guys that we have now, you have that same kind of relief where you can go out and pitch a good game and feel like the game's shut down once you get to those guys," Sabathia said.

Sabathia took an overnight flight from Portland, Oregon, after attending an NBA game with Derek Jeter. Sabathia has been at Yankee Stadium several times each week following arthroscopic surgery Oct. 11 on his right knee.

"I'm trying to get my mobility back and make sure that I'm ready to go come spring training," he said.

A 36-year-old left-hander, Sabathia pitched with a brace on the knee this year and went 9-12 with a 3.91 ERA, his lowest ERA since 2012. He will make $25 million next year, the final season of his contract.

He figures to slot in second or third in a rotation that includes Masahiro Tanaka and Michael Pineda, who also can become a free agent after next season.

CLOSE

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and Raphael Zapanta.

Raymond topped the scratch game, scratch series, and handicap series after registering 268, 702, and 726 pinfalls, respectively. He won over Dimaano (681 and 726) in the scratch series and handicap series and versus Manacop (266) in the scratch game. Manacop foiled Raymond's bid for a sweep after prevailing in the handicap game, 282-276.

Kathy Mersai of the Pin Busters went 4-for-4 in the women's division after registering 235 and 665 in the scratch game and scratch series and 254 and 715 in the handicap game and handicap series. Gloria Omechelang of ROSCOS was ranked second in the scratch game (221), scratch series (655), and handicap game (252), while SBC's Gigi Zapanta was the runner-up in the handicap series (643).

Mersai completed her impressive performance in the Monday Night League after taking the individual high average most improved average honors. She averaged 180.97 to beat Omechelang (164.04), Saolak Camacho's Janice Camacho (152.30), and Astig's Cora Muna (149.33).

In the men's field, Talavera had the high average with his 192.78 topping the 190.58 and 186.80 of Raymond and Percy, respectively. Percy, on the other hand, won in the most improved average category after downing Putitin's Julian Camacho (142.53) and Du-31's Lito Teodoro (177.27).

In the team event, SBC dominated the handicap game (911) and handicap series (2,531), while IT&E Unlimited (821) and Pin Busters (2,298) ruled the scratch game and scratch series, respectively.

WSR

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GTC, 4-1.

WPS/BSS was the top finisher in the elimination round with its perfect 5-0-0 card and 14 goals. The first placer in the six-team field yielded five goals. Mt. Carmel ended up in second place with its 3-1-1 mark, but had the most goals with 23. WSR had the same mark as MCS, but dropped to third place as the Kingfishers tallied only three goals. GTC rounded out the Top 4 after registering a 2-0-3 record, while Koberville (1-0-4) and Kagman (0-0-5) completed the boys field.

Meanwhile, WPS/BSS' Dylan Mister was ahead in the Golden Boot race after the elimination with his eight goals. Mt. Carmel's Leopaldo Naraja and Mister's teammate Casey Chambers were in second and third after getting seven and six goals, respectively. In the girls division, WSR's Mary Joy Aniana and Sophia Quintos had 10 each.

The 2016 Interscholastic Football League is organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association.

KNIGHTS

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after the collapse in the second set. The Lady Geckos, on the other hand, failed to ride on its momentum in the deciding third set, as they were stuck to 3 points after taking a slim 3-2 lead early in the game.

With SIS going cold, MCS built a promising 11-3 lead. In that run, SIS could not break most of Louisa Han's serves, while Camacho and Jan Travilla hit a couple of kills. An exhausted Han finally missed on her serve with the ball hitting the net to give the Lady Geckos only their fourth point. SIS scored anew when one of its players blocked Camacho, however, the Geckos failed to make it three in a row after a short service.

Now two points away from wrapping up the match and bagging the division championship, Travilla served for the Lady Knights and after a few exchanges, Reyes was set up for the kill and this time her shot went in with the ball rolling past the net before dropping to an unguarded spot. Reyes also scored the title-clinching point when she went for another spike and the ball hit the arm of an SIS player before going out to the sideline.

"After missing those spikes in the second set, I just kept telling myself to stay positive and keep on trying because eventually the shots will go in," said Reyes, who played in her last season with the Lady Knights. "We've come this far and we just could not afford to lose. It's great to win the championship again, especially in my last season with the team."

Mt. Carmel coach Francis San Nicolas said he did not lose faith in his team despite the rally that SIS made in the second set.

"I just had one instruction after the second set and that was to stay focus," said San Nicolas, who guided the Lady Knights to an unbeaten record in 13 games this season.

San Nicolas fielded a 10-player lineup for the girls high school competition with Karen Sato, Angela Jun, Dayna Macaranas, Ya Han, Quina Flores, and Jennifer Villagomez joining Reyes, Camacho, Louisa Han, and Travilla on the team.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	18	7	.720	—
New York	14	11	.560	4
Boston	13	12	.520	5
Brooklyn	7	17	.292	10½
Philadelphia	6	19	.240	12

Southeast Division

Charlotte	14	12	.538	—
Atlanta	12	13	.480	1½
Washington	10	14	.417	3
Orlando	11	16	.407	3½
Miami	9	17	.346	5

Central Division

Cleveland	18	6	.750	—
Chicago	13	11	.542	5
Detroit	14	13	.519	5½
Indiana	13	13	.500	6
Milwaukee	11	12	.478	6½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	20	5	.800	—
Houston	19	7	.731	1½
Memphis	18	9	.667	3
New Orleans	8	18	.308	12½
Dallas	6	19	.240	14

Northwest Division

Utah	16	10	.615	—
Oklahoma City	15	11	.577	1
Portland	13	14	.481	3½
Denver	9	16	.360	6½
Minnesota	7	18	.280	8½

Pacific Division

Golden State	22	4	.846	—
L.A. Clippers	19	7	.731	3
Sacramento	9	16	.360	12½
L.A. Lakers	10	18	.357	13
Phoenix	8	17	.320	13½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

8th Annual TanHoldings Tennis Classic

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Michael Ren proudly shows his boys U16 championship plaque during the awards ceremony for the 8th Annual TanHoldings Tennis Classic early this month at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

Sean Lee poses with his boys U14 singles championship award.

Ken Song is all smiles after getting his runner-up award in the boys U16 singles.

Ji Min Woo smiles after receiving his runner-up award in the boys U14 singles.

Jae Yun Jung shows his boys U10 singles championship award.

Men's doubles 3.0 runners-up Clayton Izuka, left, and Chris Aninzo are all smiles after receiving their plaques.

Anthony Gregoire, left, joins Daniel Kang pose for a photo after getting their boys U12 doubles championship plaques.

Men's doubles 3.0 champions Alex Park, left, and A.J. Hudkins pose for a photo.

Harden's triple-double helps Houston to 8th straight win

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Sports

With Browns still winless, 2008 Lions can relate

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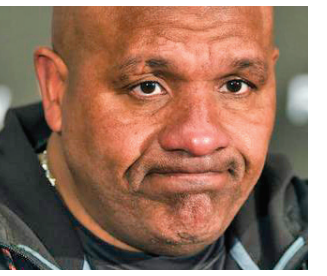

Back-to-back for Lady Knights

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Mt. Carmel School's Karleen Reyes goes up for a spike during the second set of their title game against Saipan International School in the girls high school division of the COPSSA volleyball league yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Mt. Carmel School won its finals rematch against Saipan International School to clinch the girls high school title in the 2016-2017 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Lady Knights prevailed in a three-set game, 25-15, 23-25, 15-5, to successfully defend the division championship they stole from the Lady Geckos last season. Mt. Carmel swept SIS in last season's finale, 25-15, 26-24.

When they collided anew in yesterday's winner-take-all title game, it seemed the Lady Knights were headed for another straight set triumph after cruising to victory in the opening set. However, SIS was not ready to give up that easily and pulled off a come-from-behind win in the second set.

The Lady Geckos were once down by 6, 14-20, but managed to recover and grabbed the win. With Mt. Carmel threatening to pull away, SIS coach Mili Saiki sued for time to talk things over. When the game resumed, her Lady Geckos responded with a 7-2 run to move SIS within one. The Lady Geckos were all over the court in that rally to slice the deficit, while the Lady Knights were too eager to finish off SIS that they committed several errors in the letdown.

A spike from Keona Camacho gave MCS more breathing room, 23-21, but again the Lady Knights were erratic with their set plays, while SIS did a great job scrambling for the ball to survive a couple of rallies. The Geckos went on to steal the second set, thanks to Karleen Reyes' three straight wide spikes.

With the finals down to a third and final set, SIS and MCS had to play the race-to-15 third set and the Lady Knights quickly fought back

See KNIGHTS on Page 34

WSR vs Whispering Palms/Brilliant Star in IFL

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
William S. Reyes Elementary School, left, and Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School players battle for the ball during the second half of their semis game in the 2016 Interscholastic Football League U11 yesterday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

William S. Reyes Elementary School and Whispering Palms School/Brilliant Star School advanced to the championship game in the girls division of the 2016 Interscholastic Football League U11 after posting contrasting wins yesterday at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

WSR shut down Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School in their semis game, 3-0, to clinch the second finals berth. WPS/BSS earlier took the first finals seat after winning via forfeit against Koblerville Elementary School.

Koblerville, WSR, GTC, and WPS/BSS made it to the semifinals after finishing in the Top 4 in the team standings following a round-robin regular season. WSR swept the elimination round, winning all its five games and scoring 41 goals while giving up only one.

WPS/BSS earned a 4-0-1 win-draw-loss record to rank second and collected 16 goals. Koblerville was third with its 2-1-2 mark, beating GTC in the tiebreak. Kagman Elementary School and Mt. Carmel School were the other teams that joined the girls competition and finished the regular season with 1-0-4 and 0-0-4 records, respectively.

The girls division finals will be played today at 10:30am at Pitch 2.

Over at Pitch 1 at the same time, it will be Whispering Palms/BSS versus Mt. Carmel for the boys division crown.

The Knights moved into the title game after outlasting WSR in a penalty shootout, 4-3. The WSR-MCS match ended in a scoreless draw after the overtime.

While Mt. Carmel played an extended game before gaining a finals ticket, WPS/BSS had an easier semis assignment after dominating

See WSR on Page 34

Close win for SBC in Monday Night League

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Bowling Center nosed out Pin Busters and IT&E Unlimited for the overall championships in the 23rd Philippine Bowling Association-Budweiser Monday Night League.

SBC finished the 18-week competition with a 47-25 record, narrowly beating Pin Busters, which earned a 46-26 mark. IT&E Unlimited registered a 44.5-27.5 record to rank third and was followed by ROSCOS (41.5-30.5), Saolak Camacho (40.5-31.5), DU-31 (39.5-32.5), Astig (34-36), J's Restaurant (31.4-40.5), and Putitin (23.5-48.5).

The champion team was anchored by Raymond Zapanta, who ruled three of the four individual categories. Joining Zapanta on SBC were Simon Manacop, Ador Dimaano, Lala Taitano, Raymond Angeles, and Ross, Gigi,

See CLOSE on Page 34

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
From left, Simon Manacop, Gigi and Raymond Zapanta, and Ador Dimaano of Saipan Bowling Center pose with their championship trophy during the awards ceremony for the 23rd Philippine Bowling Association-Budweiser Monday Night League held late last month at the SBC.